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Confrontations: Then and Now

Elsewhere in this issue is a story 'A Confrontation'. Please read it before reading this column. The story is about two kings, in their chariots, coming face to face on a narrow path. One had to move backward for the other to proceed. It is interesting to note how the impasse was over.

The story is from the *Buddha Jatakas*, more than 2,500 years old. A similar situation arose recently. Two vehicles, carrying officials belonging to two departments of the Government of India, coming from opposite directions, met on a narrow bridge. Who would give way? The question has nothing to do with any department but with our mentality. The vehicles came face to face with either of them refusing to reverse and clear the way for the other. There was an exchange of heated words between them and at one stage they fixed guns on one another. One group overpowered an officer of the other group and took him away. The second group made a complaint to the nearest police station for "kidnapping" their officer.

What happened next is not important. Of course some higher-ups must have intervened and put an end to the awful ego-clash. The question is far more basic: How much have we progressed in matters of civility and patience from the era which is the background of the legend presented elsewhere! What is important for us is to reflect on this question.

Founded by
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Words of Wisdom

Loss and gain

For everything you have missed,
you have gained something else;
and for everything you gain,
you lose something.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Chacha Nehru and Children's Day

India could not have chosen a better day than November 14, the birth date of Jawaharlal Nehru, as Children's Day. On behalf of the readers of *Chandamama*, we pay our humble tribute to his memory, and recall how he endeared himself to children.

Jawaharlal Nehru became the first Prime Minister of independent India on August 15, 1947. In May 1948, he released the first issue of *Shankar's Weekly*, a journal brought out by the famous cartoonist Shankar. Shankar's cartoons making fun of the British rulers had attracted the attention of our national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru.

On seeing *Chandamama* issues in six languages, Jawaharlal Nehru commented: "It is rather an unusual feat to publish a children's periodical in so many languages. I wish it success."

In 1949, Shankar wished to bring out a children's number and invited paintings and writings from children in India. All the selected entries found a place in the Children's Number. Pandit Nehru was invited to distribute the prizes and release the Children's Number of *Shankar's Weekly*. Nehru must have been very happy that he got an opportunity to forget himself in the company of children and spend some happy moments with them. His sister, Vijayalakshmi Pandit's three daughters — Chandralekha, Nayantara, and Rita Vitasta — used to call him Chacha, meaning uncle, and he also became Chacha to the children of India.

The next year, entries were also received from a dozen nations outside India. The prizes were distributed by the President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad.



The story goes that Pandit Nehru was disappointed because he missed a chance to be with children. So, when they met next, Pandit Nehru told Shankar that he would himself distribute the prizes of Shankar's competition every year.

Newspapers used to splash photographs of Panditji fondling children. He even suggested to Shankar that the function should be presided over by a child, and his own role would be just to distribute the prizes!

Those were days when television was yet to come to India. All India Radio one year invited Prime Minister Nehru to spend his birthday with children and the whole programme was broadcast.

Somehow, he was not available for such programmes in the subsequent years. However, he never missed the prize distribution organised by Shankar.

Jawaharlal Nehru passed away on May 27, 1964. The Government declared November 14 that year as Children's Day and the country has since been celebrating Children's Day to coincide with Nehru Jayanthi.

Incidentally, Universal Children's Day comes off on November 20 — the day the United Nations adopted the Children's Charter of Rights in 1989.



Defeat and Victory

The dark night had a cold, clammy feeling to it. Rain poured down in torrents and the sinister splashing sounds would have frightened anyone. But King Vikram resolutely slung the corpse across his shoulders and plodded on towards the cremation ground. Suddenly the Vetala in the corpse spoke: "Listen to this story, Vikram. Perhaps it will take your mind off what you are doing."

On the banks of the river Tamraparni were several small kingdoms, which were constantly at war with one another. At the end of one such war, Shankar, the king of a small kingdom, defeated and killed the King of Gaja, and occupied the throne. Madhav, the young prince of Gaja, escaped death narrowly. He sought refuge with King Saurya of Vyaghra, a neighbouring kingdom.

Shankar was not content with one conquest. He chalked out a plan to invade Vyaghra as well. 'Two birds with one stone... If this plan succeeds, I can not only kill my enemy, Madhav, but add Vyaghra to my kingdom as well,' he thought cunningly. His army crossed the river in boats and attacked Vyaghra. But Saurya and Madhav were prepared for this attack. Shankar's army was badly defeated and had to return to Gaja after suffering huge losses. This defeat festered like a wound in Shankar's mind. He desperately searched for a way in which he could get even with them.

Now Lavanya, the daughter of Saurya, had found her soul mate in Madhav, the young prince of Gaja, who was taking refuge in Vyaghra. Lavanya and Madhav planned to inform Saurya about their desire to get married, when the right time came. Meanwhile, Shankar



sent word to Saurya, demanding the surrender of his enemy Madhav. "I shall destroy your kingdom if you do not submit to this demand," he threatened. Saurya refused to be frightened by Shankar's threats. He sent back word saying, "Have you already forgotten your defeat? You will face a worse disaster if you so much as step into my kingdom." Shankar backtracked for the time being.

Soon Saurya decided to arrange a Spring Festival in his kingdom. He invited all his allies from the neighbouring kingdoms. However, he did not invite Shankar as he had heard that Shankar was still harbouring hatred for him.

Vyaghra wore a festive air. Princess Lavanya was very much involved in the celebrations. Now it so happened that almost all the allies of King Saurya were suitors of Lavanya. Each of them wanted to be the lucky man. Each secretly hoped that Saurya would make an announcement about Lavanya's engagement during the Spring Festival.

While all the suitors were weaving their own dreams, Madhav, whom Lavanya had already chosen, was in deep despair. He knew about Lavanya's dilemma.

Under the circumstances, he knew that it was quite impossible for Lavanya to marry him. 'I cannot attend this celebration,' he thought to himself miserably. He stayed in his chamber, ate a solitary meal, and then went to sleep.

The celebrations were proceeding grandly. Everyone was in high spirits. The banquet was impressive and all the guests were duly impressed. A festive mood set in.

Suddenly, there was a huge commotion as a messenger arrived at the banquet hall, quite out of breath. "Your majesty! All hell has broken loose! The King of Gaja has just crossed the river with his army. The soldiers are looting and burning the villages on the river bank!" he gasped. There was a deathly silence as a feeling of dread descended on everyone.

Saurya was a brave and valiant king. He rose up calmly and said in a composed voice, "Friends, you have all been my allies in the past. I know that even now you will lend me your full support as we face Shankar and his army." But no immediate response was forthcoming. Saurya was shocked to realise that they were all in the mood for celebrations and not for any



battle. He also knew that without their help, he had no hope of facing Shankar.

Suddenly Lavanya, who seemed to have made up her mind about something, rose up and sought everyone's attention. "I know that many of you had expressed your desire to marry me. I confess that I have already decided to marry Madhav. But the present situation demands that I changed my mind. I will marry whoever gives my father utmost support in winning against the army of Gaja. Let God be my witness!"

All those present looked at her in amazement. Immediately there was a stir as all the guests hurriedly rose up from the table. Each wanted to be the first to lend his unquestioning support to Saurya!

Each of them stood a fair chance of winning her hand in marriage. The war against Shankar was a test for each one of them!

While there was hectic activity in Saurya's court, Lavanya quietly left the hall and went to Madhav's chambers. She found him fast asleep. "How can you sleep while danger and disgrace knock at the door?" She quickly told him about the impending battle and the promise she had made at the banquet. "Madhav, I want to marry only you, but in the light of the present situation, it is up to you to win my hand in marriage." She then quickly returned to her chambers.

Madhav was taken aback at the turn of events. He sat in thought for a long time and then taking his dagger, he left his chambers. He made his way to the river through the jungle.

Soon he came upon the army, which was camping in the jungle. He hid himself and listened to all the talk that was going on in the camp. Evidently, the army had decided to break for the day and go for the attack the next morning. Madhav then stealthily made his way towards the tent in which Shankar would be resting.

Finally, he found the tent and crawled in. Shankar was fast asleep and there was no guard at the entrance either.

Madhav could not believe how his job had been made so easy. He pulled out his dagger and approached the sleeping Shankar. 'This is the man who ruthlessly



killed my father, usurped the kingdom and made me a refugee. He's going to pay for all that now,' he thought. Yet, he found that he could not stab him with the dagger and kill him. Something was holding him back. 'I can't kill an unarmed man, even if he's my worst enemy,' he thought to himself. He struck the dagger into the pillow on which rested Shankar's head and quickly made his way out of the tent.

Shankar woke up and just managed to see the man who left the tent. He saw the sword stuck to his pillow and realised how narrowly he had missed death.

The next morning, everyone was set for the battle. King Saurya's army was ready as well. Madhav joined the ranks of the defenders of Vyaghra. The fort was stormed as the first streaks of dawn showed in the sky. Alas! King Saurya's army was completely defeated. Saurya, his family and supporters were all taken prisoners.

They were brought into the presence of Shankar. He looked around at them all and his eyes rested on the

young Madhav. He recognised him as the one who had entered his tent the night before.

Saurya took the crown from his head and put it at Shankar's feet, as a sign of accepting defeat. But Shankar stopped him and said, "What are you doing, Saurya? This crown looks better on your head than at my feet. Consider me only as a guest to your Spring Festival! Keep your crown." All those present were astonished at this enigmatic reply.

Then Shankar took out the dagger and looking around said, "Somebody left this dagger in my tent last night. May I know who it was?" Madhav came forward boldly and said, "It was I." Shankar looked at him and asked; "Who are you, young man?" Madhav replied with pride, "I am Madhav, prince of Gaja, whose father you killed so mercilessly."

Shankar paused before he replied. "My friend, you entered my tent yesterday, but you did not kill me when you had me at your mercy. Good, I shall repay you to the best of my ability. Whatever I cannot give, I hope Saurya will make good. What do you say, Saurya? I'll give him back his kingdom! Maybe you can find a beautiful queen fit for him! I declare that as I have no children of my own, I would like to adopt him as my heir!"

Saurya, who had been standing in surprise all this while, came forward and embraced Shankar. He turned to his daughter and one look at her bashful face told him the whole story. He had no hesitation in declaring Madhav as his son-in-law.

Madhav and Lavanya were married in a grand

ceremony. Madhav took his bride back to the kingdom of Gaja, where he ascended the throne.

Having narrated this story, the Vetala asked King Vikram, "Who was the most magnanimous among them all – Lavanya, who was willing to sacrifice her love for the good of her father's kingdom or Madhav who sacrificed his love and his future by not killing an unarmed man or Shankar, who sacrificed his victory for the sake of his enemy who had spared his life? If you know the answer but choose to keep quiet, your head will break into a million pieces."

Vikram was ready with his answer. "It is true that Lavanya was willing to sacrifice her love, but it was under circumstances over which she had no control. Madhav's deed was not really so noble because he had in fact gone in to kill an unarmed man. Only the fear of earning a bad name must have stopped him.

"So it is actually Shankar who showed true magnanimity. Only Shankar knew that someone had spared his life the night before, even though he could have easily killed him. His victory over the army of Saurya the next day was decisive. But he decided to sacrifice his victory to the man who had spared him, even before he knew his identity. And even after he found out that it was Madhav, he did not change his mind in the least. Truly, this is what magnanimity is all about!"

Seeing that King Vikram had once again broken his silence, the Vetala flew with the corpse and went back to the tree.





Send your questions to :
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Q Is there any justification in the Indians worshipping some of the animals and birds?
- Yogmaya Shetty, Mumbai.

A What they worship – if you really mean worship – are not animals and birds, but powers or godly emanations assuming the form of an animal or a bird. Let us take, for example, Hanuman and Garuda. It is wrong to describe Hanuman as a 'monkey-god' or Garuda as a kind of eagle. They represent mighty primeval forces at the service of the Divine.

Animals and birds were there long before man was created. Like the sky, the sun or the moon, they too were early wonders for man and teachers, too. Man received his most invaluable education from birds and beasts – how to look for food, how to find or build shelter, how to climb trees, how to swim, so on and so forth. Who could have inspired him to fly if not the bird? There seems to have existed a science, since lost, to decipher the sounds made by beasts and birds.

The primitive man, by observing the conduct of the birds and beasts, could get hints of cyclone, earthquake and other natural phenomena. As man grew enlightened, he also realised that beasts and birds were as

much a creation of the Supreme Consciousness as man.

Certain animals received special reverence from man because of psychological as well as practical reasons. In the Vedas, the term **Go** meant light as well as cow. That was one of the reasons why the cow occupied an honoured place in our life. Lord Siva's favourite creature is the

bull. Krishna tended the cattle. Though such traditions have very different symbolic meaning, in the popular mind this association is enough to arouse a loving attitude towards the cow. Besides, the cow was one of the earliest creatures to help man in cultivating civilisation. The cow, like the mother, fed us with her milk too.

The serpent, in Yoga and Tantra, represents occult energy in man. The serpent is an ornament of Lord Siva. If the figure of a serpent is worshipped, it is the occult energy which is worshipped. One of the great scientists of our time, August Kekule, unable to find a solution to an intricate problem concerning carbon atom and the Benzene ring, dreamt of a serpent lying coiled, the end of its tail stuck in its mouth. When he woke up, he had found the solution! Probably the serpent figure is not a mere symbol; may be the subtle appearance of the hidden powers is similar to it.



THE HOMECOMING

The handsome man in the taxi was about thirty. His coloured hair, fashionable suit, and perfume gave him away as someone from the city. He was on his way to Sneh-ka-Mala, a tiny village in the Aravalli hills of Rajasthan. He was Arvind Gujjar, who had left the village as a starving boy of fourteen after the drought had claimed his father.

Memories rushed through Arvind's mind like a kaleidoscope—the burning sensation of hunger and thirst, his journey to an unknown city alone to find work and food, his mother so thin and yet so beautiful with her colourful blouse and red *pallu*, his barren village, the dry river bed, Mayee, his favourite buffalo, and her calf being turned loose as there was no fodder to feed them, his dear friend Gopal with the lovely smile... soon, he fell into a drowsy heat induced stupor.

"We have reached," said the driver. Arvind awoke and was surprised to see a lush green area. This was certainly not his dry village. He was about to protest, when he checked himself on hearing music. The tune reminded him of the way his mother sang before the drought had come. Later the singing had stopped and all

his mother did was walk for miles in the scorching heat, looking for a pitcher of water and a few twigs to cook their measly meals!

Soon Arvind noticed a procession approaching. He waited for the procession under the shade of a nearby tree. The people appeared in a whirl of colours. The children were gaily dressed. Little boys in sparkling white clothes and little girls in little red *ghagras* ran ahead of the group, closely followed by the adults. They were singing a song, thanking the river Ruparel for her bounty. The whole group looked radiant, happy and well fed.

A man from the group came towards Arvind and asked, "Where are you headed, brother?" "Can you tell me the way to Sneh-ka-Mala, my friend?" asked Arvind. "You've reached, brother, and I'm the *Sarpanch* of the village," answered the man as he smiled a heart-warming smile. Arvind recognised the smile. "Gopal! Gopu, is that you? I'm Arvind, your friend Avu. Don't you remember me?" The two men hugged each other with tears in their eyes. "Your mother will be so happy," was all that the *Sarpanch* could say.

The procession had moved ahead. There was so





much to talk about, but Arvind had to see his mother first. He looked helplessly around at all the lush greenery. Gopal pointed in the direction of Arvind's house and rushed to join the procession.

Teethlibai, Arvind's mother, was sitting under the shade of a tree. Words cannot explain the happiness that lit up the old lady's eyes, as she hugged her long lost son. In the mean time, Gopal informed the villagers that Arvind had returned. Many of them came to meet Arvind. Some wondered about his new looks, but the villagers had seen stranger transformations; they had seen a river reborn, they had also seen acres and acres of burnt brown land turn green!

All along Arvind had been waiting to be alone with his mother and friend. He was desperately wanting to ask about this wonderful transformation that had come over the village. The happiness and prosperity reflected in the eyes of all whom he had met in the village had made him extremely curious to know the reason. He pounced at the opportunity as soon as the last guest had left his house. Soon Gopal was telling Arvind all that had happened in the sixteen years that he was away.

"Do you remember the stories about our forefathers trapping the little rainfall that fell, by making *johads* (a semi circular water pond built with the help of mud walls, along the contour of hill slopes to store rain water) and *bandhs* (small dams)? The stories of *shramdaan*, where everybody would spend the day doing community work and then follow it up with a picnic at the spot? The story

Ruparel means 'full of beauty'. The Ruparel flows mostly through Alwar district in Northeast Rajasthan. In the 1950s, due to the neglect of traditional water harvesting systems like the *johads* and *bandhs* and the depletion of surrounding forests, the water tables fell and by 1970, the Ruparel was no longer a perennial river. The droughts started in the 1980s. However, the concerted efforts of the villagers and organisations like the Tarun Bharat Sangh and others have brought the river back to life again. Today, the people of the valley are returning to a prosperous and happy life.

about the river Ruparel flowing throughout the year and the land being green and fertile? How we laughed at those funny stories when hunger was gnawing at our stomachs!”

“Soon after you left,” Gopal continued, “some well-wishers came to the village. They were young, educated social workers, who wanted to help our village to come out of the drought situation. They kept asking the elders about the old johads and bandhs. Grandmother told them what she had told us so often. They explained to us how our traditional systems of trapping rain water by building johads and bandhs were the best examples of how to harvest rain water and that reviving those methods was the best way to bring back the fertility of the region. They urged the elders in the village to share their invaluable knowledge with them to help restore the old and broken down johads and bandhs in the village.”

“Soon the men and women joined the team of social workers,” Gopal continued, “in their effort to restore the old dams. The johads were repaired and they could trap water once again. The underground water tables came up and the land became green again. Initially, the water was barely sufficient. But then one summer the river just refused to dry up. The crops were sown. Some of the

men came back from the cities and picked up the plough, the animals came back, and even the surrounding forests grew back.

“Today we barely walk for five to ten minutes to get fresh water. The land yields so much of food that we have enough to feed our families and sell the extra in the market. The cattle have multiplied and yield so much of milk that we consume all of it; the extra is converted as ghee and sold in the market. I can go on, but the most important change of all is that we know our own worth and the worth of our traditional johads and bandhs. We have re-learned our old knowledge. Nobody can fool us anymore or take away what belongs to the whole community.”

“The answers were always here with us; how unnecessary was our suffering”, thought Arvind and his eyes filled with tears. Arvind had actually planned to take Gopu away to the city, where he too could find a job and live comfortably. But his friend had turned their village into a heaven, and now there was no need to go anywhere else. He smelt the cool fresh air, and felt it was good to be back home.

-Erica Taraporewala

Courtesy: Kalpavriksh and the National Biodiversity and Strategic Action Plan

Meet the...

Gurungs of Nepal

The Gurungs inhabiting the Himalayan ranges of Nepal are a tribe of sturdy hillsmen who have become famous for their martial prowess and their stamina, which make them invaluable assets to the army. As early as the 16th century, they were fighting as mercenaries for Hindu chieftains. In the 19th century, the British began recruiting them into the Indian army, and the Gurkha regiments were established - starting a tradition that continues to this day. Today, many Gurung soldiers serve in hilly areas in the north-eastern regions such as Nagaland and Assam. Their familiarity with the terrain gives them a great advantage over other soldiers.



The Gurungs are Mongoloids and their language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman group. Most of them are also fluent in Nepali. They are concentrated mostly in western Nepal. With the exception of those serving in the army and the police, most Gurungs depend on agriculture and animal husbandry for their livelihood.

In some villages, more than 50 per cent of the men between 19 and 45 are away serving in one of the British or Indian Gurkha regiments. In the army, Gurungs are exposed to the influence of Hinduism. However, most of them have retained an ideology rooted in an ancient tribal religion, interspersed with some elements of Tibetan Buddhism.



STORIES FROM MANY
CULTURES

GIFT FROM THE ADDER

Once upon a time there lived a poor girl called Gisela who worked in a farmer's house. She had no parents and no one to call as her own. So she had to work for her living. The farmer did not pay her any wages and made her work very hard indeed. But at least they gave her three square meals a day and a bed to sleep on. Gisela did not complain and was grateful for what they gave her.

One morning the farmer's wife called her and said, "Gisela, Gisela, go and milk the cows." The cowshed was far away and it was raining. Gisela was drenched by the time she reached the shed. She started milking the cows, shivering in cold. As soon as her bucket was full she heard a hissing sound behind. Turning round she saw a huge adder sliding towards her. It had a golden crown on its head. Gisela wanted to scream but stopped when she looked at the adder's eyes. It had such a thirsty look that she felt sorry and lowered her bucket. The adder lapped up the milk and gave her a grateful look. Then it turned back and slipped away outside the shed.

Gisela was scared when she saw that the adder had finished drinking all the milk and there was only a trickle left at the bottom of the bucket. She knew that the farmer's wife would scold her and possibly not give her any breakfast at all. She crept inside the house shaking in fear.

"Gisela, Gisela, have you milked the cow?" asked the farmer's wife from the kitchen.

"Yes," said Gisela softly.

"Bring the bucket here and pour the milk into the milk pan," said the farmer's wife.

Gisela turned her bucket and lo and behold milk

simply poured out of her bucket! There was so much that three milk pans were brimming over instead of just one.

"Clever girl!" said the farmer's wife smiling at her for the first time in her life. "I shall send you to milk the cows every morning."

"Oh no, please don't," said Gisela thinking of the adder, "please give me something else to do."

"You'll milk the cows every day from now on – both morning and evening," said the farmer's wife. "I shall not listen to any excuses."

Gisela said no more because she knew it was no use. She went to milk the cows every day after that. And every day the adder came, the golden



crown glittering on its head, and drank up all the milk in her bucket. But the milk overflowed every time she went back home and the farmer's wife got far more than what she expected. It put her in a very good mood. She did wonder, of course, why the cows gave so much more milk whenever Gisela went to milk them. But fortunately she did not go to check it out herself! So, no one got to know about the adder with the golden crown.

By and by Gisela stopped being afraid of the snake. She even got very friendly with it because it made life so much easier for her. She only wished it could speak to her. But though it couldn't speak, it always gave her a look of trust and gratitude. It made Gisela very happy.

Days went by. Gisela was now a young woman and a very beautiful one. She was courted by many young farmers who wanted to marry her. The farmer and his wife knew that Gisela would not live with them for long and were quite kind to her. Gisela continued to milk the cows and attend to all her usual chores. She was not sure which of the young farmers she would marry and so kept to herself. More days went by and finally Gisela found out the young farmer who was different from all the rest and knew that he was the right man for her.

So she promised to marry him when he asked her and was very happy. The wedding day was fixed. The farmer and his wife decided to hold a wedding feast for her.

Gisela went to milk the cows for the last time. The adder came to drink the milk as usual.

"You know, dear adder, this is the last time I shall feed you," said Gisela, "because I'm getting married tomorrow. After the wedding I shall go away with my husband to my new home and not see you again. My

husband does not own any cows, so I shall not be able to give you milk any more."

The adder gave her a sorrowful look.

"I shall miss you, dear adder," said Gisela. "You've been so good to me. The farmer I am getting married to is a poor man and does not have many things in his house. But I don't mind. He is a good and kind man and I know that I shall be happy even if we are poor. Do wish me joy." The adder looked at her and glided away.

Gisela's wedding feast was a grand success. Everyone in the village turned up. They ate and drank and danced and made merry. Suddenly there was a hush and everyone stood still wondering what was

wrong. At first they heard a hissing sound. Then they saw an adder

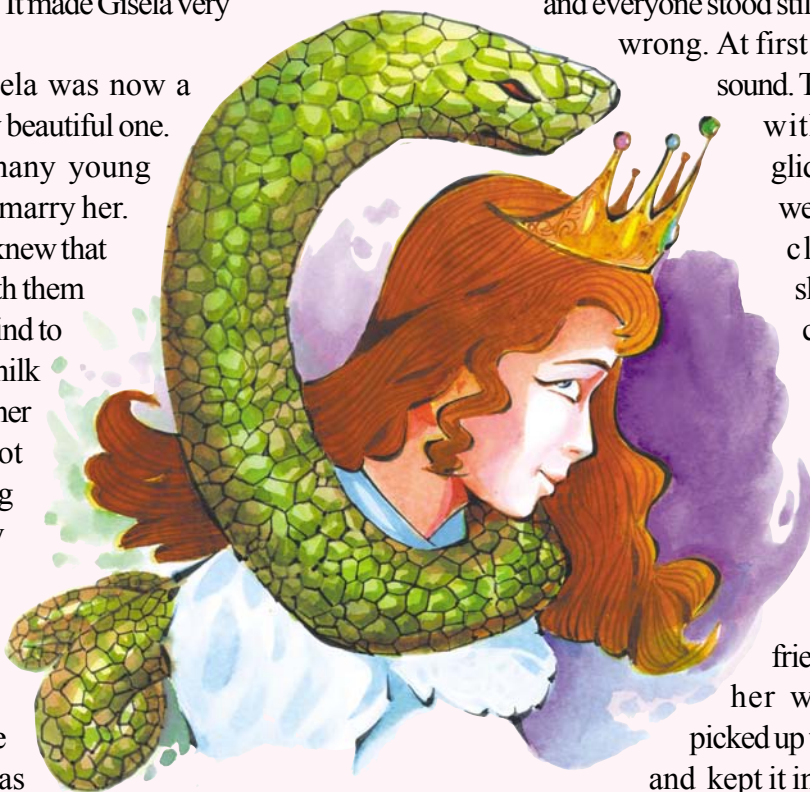
with a golden crown gliding inside the barn. It went right up to the bride, climbed up on her shoulder and shook its crown until it fell on her lap. Then it glided back quietly out into the darkness.

Everybody was stunned. But Gisela had tears in her eyes when she saw how her friend had come to attend her wedding feast. She

picked up the little golden crown and kept it in her purse. The feast and merry making went on until the small

hours of the morning.

When Gisela opened her purse the next morning she found it full of gold. The moment she shook out the coins it got filled up with yet more gold. From that night her purse was never empty no matter how much gold she took out. Gisela and her husband became the richest couple in the land. But they were loved by all not because they were rich but they were good and generous and shared their wealth with the others, especially the farmers who had given Gisela a home. **- By Swapna Dutta**





Uttar Pradesh is a land of rainbow and has a variety of geographical and cultural diversity. It is an ancient cradle of Indian culture. Uttar Pradesh has been popular since mythological times. It was here in Uttar Pradesh that Lord Rama and Lord Krishna of our epics were born. Lord Buddha and Lord Mahavira have also been associated with Uttar Pradesh. The State had also been amidst many historical activity with many Indian rulers like Asoka, Harshavardhana, and the Mughal emperors making it their focal point.

With an area of 236,286 sq km, Uttar Pradesh is the fourth largest State in India. It has a population of 166,052,859. Uttar Pradesh is surrounded by Bihar in the east, Madhya Pradesh in the south, Rajasthan, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, and the Haryana in the west and Uttarakhand and Nepal in the north.

The two holy rivers of Indian mythology, the Ganga and Yamuna, flow through the State. The other major rivers are the Gomti, Ramganga, and Ghaghara. Lucknow is the capital of the State.

Abdullah and the phantoms

In the village of Sultanpur lived a boy called Abdullah. He was 12 years old. He had curly hair and an engaging smile. He was very helpful around the house and was always ready to lend a helping hand to his neighbours. He would attend to their deliveries, buy the groceries they needed, look after their shop and do a lot of other odd jobs. Everyone paid him something for his help.

At first Abdullah did not know what to do with all the pocket money he received. Then he started spending it on sweets and food. However, once his stomach was full, he had to distract himself with something else. So he started buying toys. Initially, he only bought rattles and snare-drums to play with. Then his interest grew to bigger and bigger toys. He slowly started a collection. He had half an army of toy soldiers, toy elephants, horses and chariots. He even had names for each one of them.





Such was his fascination for these toys that he gradually neglected his neighbours and all thought of work. He spent all his time with his toys. At one point of time he had no work and no money either. He had spent it all on his toys! To top it all he used to get hungry.

He went to his neighbours and pleaded for some job to do. He approached Salim the butcher. "Can I do your deliveries or get you something from the market? I haven't

done any work the past one week and I haven't eaten anything since last night."

Salim knew very well what he did with the money and did not approve of Abdullah wasting his money. However, he said nothing and instead gave him some food to eat. Other neighbours, too, took turns and started giving Abdullah food every day.

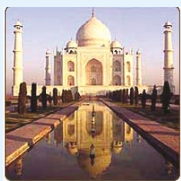
"No, Abdullah, I won't give you any money. But whenever you're hungry, you can drop by and ask aunty for food," informed his uncle Omar.

Abdullah was in despair. While his food was taken care of, no money meant he could not buy any more toys. What a disaster! He had become obsessed with them. He had reached a stage where he was ready to do anything to get the money he needed to buy new toys.

Sultanpur had its share of mischievous lads most of whom knew of Abdullah's obsession. They decided to play a joke on him. They went to Abdullah and said, "Brother, do you remember the *bhooth bungalow* near the village tank? If you're prepared to spend a night there, we'll give you a hundred rupees and even pack some food for you for the night. Will you accept the challenge?"

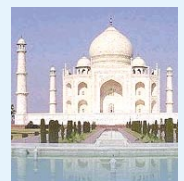
Abdullah was thrilled. 'Wow, here was easy money,' he thought. Aloud, he said, "Give me some money to buy toys, and I'll even visit hell if you want."

That night, the boys gave him a cloth bundle that contained food. They also showed him the hundred rupees



The land of the Taj

The Taj Mahal in Agra is often described as the most beautiful monument that has ever been built. A marvellous monument in marble, the Taj Mahal is among the seven wonders of the modern world.



Emperor Shah Jahan had the Taj Mahal built in memory of his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal. It was built as a mausoleum to house the body of Mumtaz Mahal. When Shah Jahan died in 1666, he too was buried there.

The Taj stands on the banks of the river Yamuna. The whole structure has been constructed with white marble stone. This was built over a period of twenty-two years and was completed in A.D. 1648 with the help of no less than twenty thousand workers!

The architectural design is called arabesque style, in which each element can stand beautifully on its own but at the same time fits perfectly with the other parts of the whole structure.

The whole structure (inside as well as outside) is decorated with inlaid designs of flowers and calligraphy using semi-precious stones such as agate and jasper. The main archways, chiselled with passages from the Holy Quran and the bold scrollwork of flowery pattern, give it a captivating charm.

Crafts



Uttar Pradesh is famous for its handicrafts. Bamboo weaving is very popular in the State. Basket, trays, furniture and wall hangings are made out of bamboo. The bamboo is locally called raffia and is cultivated on the river banks.

Metal ornamentation is another popular craft of the State. Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh is synonymous with metalwork. It is popular for its coloured enamel and intricate engravings.

The other popular crafts of the State are woodwork, stonework, lac jewellery and bangles, ivory carvings, and toy making.

Abdullah would get if he managed to spend the night at the house. Then they took him to the bungalow.

Abdullah was carrying some of his toys. He arranged them around him and got involved with them. As the night grew, he became more and more engrossed that he forgot his surroundings.

Now, the house was actually haunted by four ghosts. They were naughty ghosts and loved to frighten people who inadvertently went there to spend a night. In the middle of the night, the ghosts would come out and start moaning. When people saw or heard these noises, they would rush out screaming, leaving all their possessions behind. The ghosts would have a jolly laugh at this and fought with each other as to who was the most scary. So when Abdullah entered the house, they rubbed their ghostly hands in glee expecting the boy to rush out screaming in fright.

Imagine their surprise when they found the boy least interested in the house or its surroundings. The ghosts became annoyed and then angry to find their peace and privacy disturbed. They came flitting across the room and

saw Abdullah sitting against the pillar. They moved around him, made gestures and tried to attract his attention.

One ghost went near him and then screamed in fright. Abdullah had his eyes open but did not pay any attention! The ghosts thought that he was in a trance! Actually Abdullah was engrossed with his toys.

At about that time, Abdullah realised that he was hungry. In the darkness he searched for the food packet his friends had given him. His outstretched hands found the cloth bundle containing food. "Ha, top knot, I'll fix you first," he exclaimed opening the cloth bundle.

Then his groping hand found a rice cake. He took it out and said, "I'll swallow you just like that fatty!" He munched it in silence. Now his probing fingers found a boiled egg. He caressed it lovingly with his hands and said, "Bald head, you're next!" At last he found a coarse piece of bread, and exclaimed, "So there you are furry fur, I'm not going to spare you either." He then ate that too. But he was still hungry and muttering at his friends for not packing enough food he lay down and soon drifted into sleep.

Now the ghosts who were listening to this shivered in



fright. In a remarkable coincidence their names were just what Abdullah called out — Top Knot, Fatty, Bald Head, and Furry Fur! The ghosts thought that Abdullah meant to eat them up. They told one another, “He is no ordinary mortal. He knows each one of us by name. Let’s please him with our looted booty and see if he’ll spare us.”

They went into the rooms and brought out the large hoards of gold and silver they had collected over the years. They placed it in front of him and said, “Sir, please take these and spare our lives.”

Abdullah, who was in deep sleep and dreaming of food, did not hear them. He was hungry and his stomach was growling loudly. Tossing and turning Abdullah began to mutter loudly, “No, that won’t do. I’m very hungry. I’ll



eat up whatever I can lay my hands on.”

At these words, the ghosts panicked. They fled the house and did not stop till they left the village.

In the morning, Abdullah woke up and was surprised to find himself lying in the midst of a veritable treasure. He had no idea what happened in the night. He only realised that he had spent a night in a haunted house but nothing had disturbed his sleep!

Slowly Abdullah realised how lucky he had been the previous night. He thanked god for saving his life. He took the booty home and turned a new leaf. He lost his obsession with

toys and began to act with greater responsibility.

The villagers, too, were happy to see the change in him and after a few years they made him the Mayor of the city.

- By Vidhya Raj

Safai Sainik



ICPE invites all budding artists to take part in a national poster campaign on the theme **‘Wealth in Waste. Don’t litter. Recycle it’**. The national contest is being conducted in collaboration with a children’s magazine from October 1 to December 15, 2003 and is open to 9 to 13-year-old children.

The Indian Centre for Plastics in the Environment (ICPE) handles issues related to plastics and environment. To create awareness and promote plastic waste management, ICPE has launched a project called “It’s My World – Imagination for a Cleaner Environment” with a cute mascot of a Safai Sainik

who will teach us how to keep our environment clean.

As you know, plastics are both useful and harmful. Since they do not degrade easily, they cause various problems. ICPE hopes to create a better understanding of how to separate our garbage from reusable and non-reusable litter through the 3-R mantra – Reuse, Recycle and Recover.

For contest details and entry forms contact your schools or write to ICPE, 205, Hari Chambers, 58/64 Shaheed Bhagat Singh Road, Fort, Mumbai – 400 023. email: itsmyworld@envir-icpe.com

PUZZLE DAZZLE

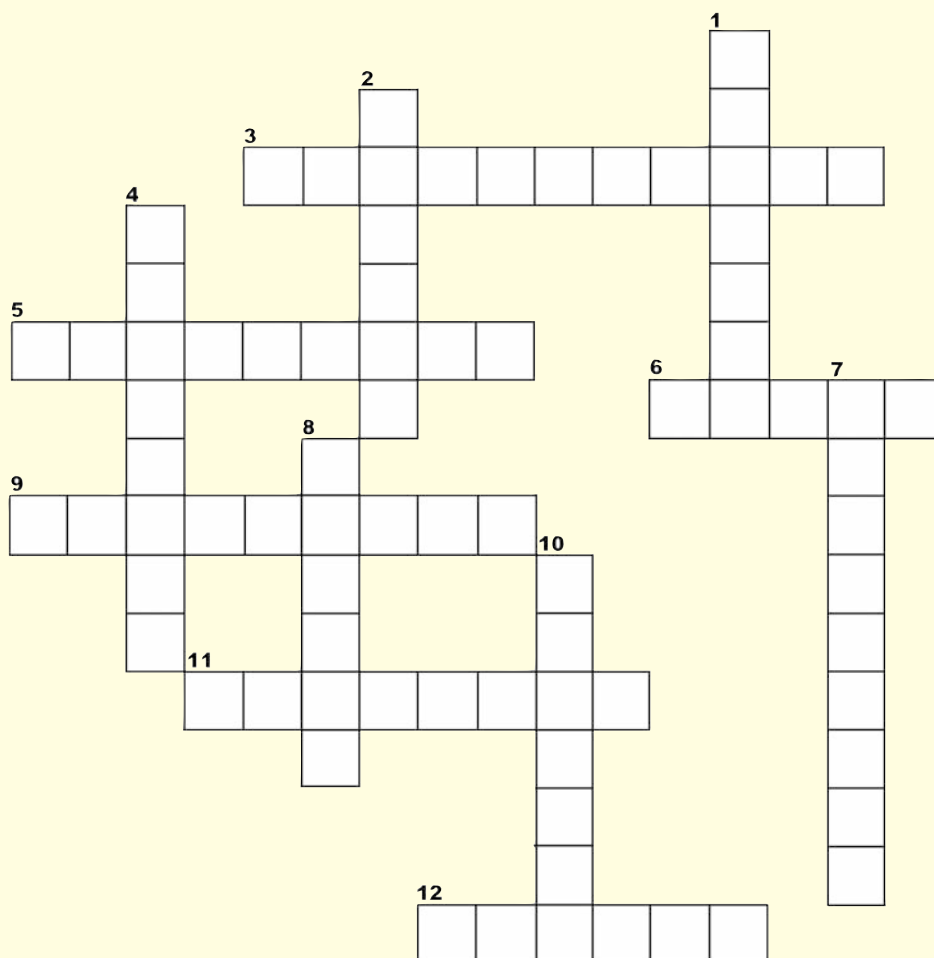
Languages of the world

What does language mean?

It is a system of conveying or communicating ideas; specifically, human speech through voice, sounds and gestures. There are over 2,700 languages in the world and in addition, there are over 7,000 dialects.

The language in which a government conducts business is the official language of that country.

Can you identify the official languages from the various clues here? *Bonne chance!* (This means 'good luck' in French!)



Across

3. This language, also known as Azeri, is spoken by 89 per cent of the population of Azerbaijan.
5. The Chinese language spoken in Hong Kong is called. . .
6. The official language of Cambodia.
9. The common language of most of population of Namibia.
11. One of the two official languages of the Philippines. This is based on the Tagalog dialect.
12. The official language of Lebanon, Kuwait, Iraq...

Down

1. The main language of Venezuela.
2. The language used officially in Israel.
4. Standard Chinese is also known as...
7. The only created language of the 20th century.
8. The official language of Bangladesh. This is also spoken in India.
10. The national language of Sri Lanka.

- By Vidhya Raj

(Answers on page 92)

A Confrontation

Thousands of years ago the kingdom of Varanasi was ruled by a young king named Brahmadatakumar. He lived a simple life and devoted all his time to ensuring happiness for his people. He asked some of the nobles of his court, who were known for their truthfulness, to move about in the kingdom without letting anybody know about their position or intention and find out how the officers were dealing with the people. If any officer or landlord was found to be dishonest or unkind towards the people, he was to be brought to the king to be warned or punished.

What is more, the king encouraged the villagers to develop an understanding and cordiality among themselves and sort out any difference or cause for conflict amongst themselves through mutual goodwill. The king's ministers convened meetings to discuss and solve their problems. Varanasi soon became a haven for peace and prosperity.

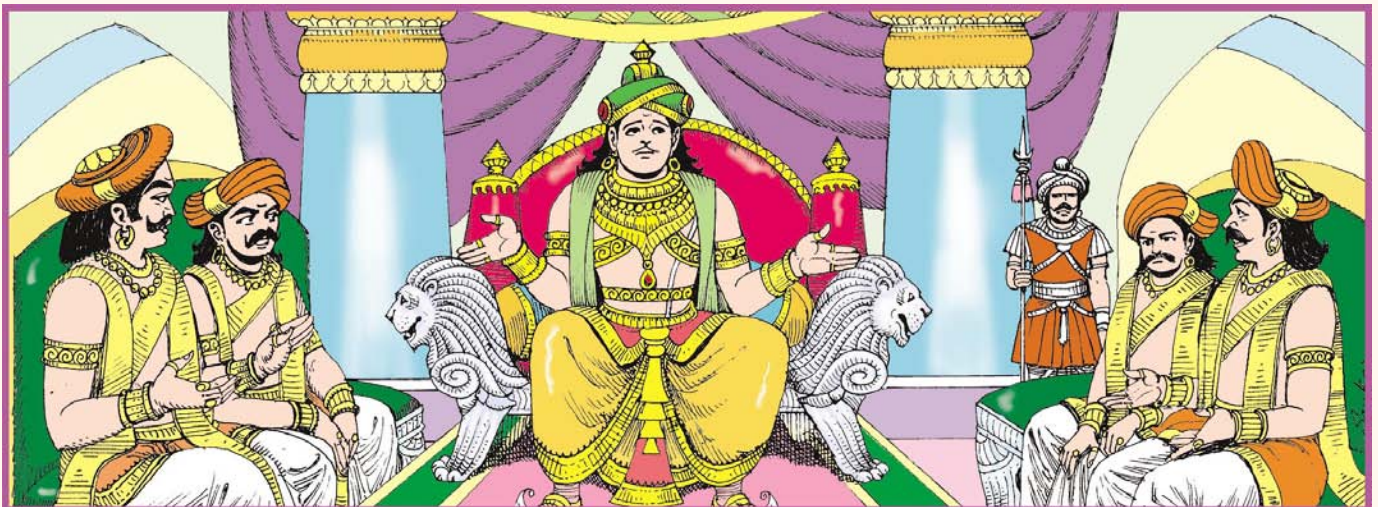
The king would ask his confidants, "Tell me, what are the faults the people find with our administration?" They would, in all sincerity, say the people indeed had no complaints. But the king would not be satisfied. He would himself disguise as a pilgrim, and visit villages and markets and mingle with the common people and listen to their conversations and discussions. At no time did he hear anything critical of his rule. All praised his wisdom, justice and nobility.

One day he thought, 'Well, my knowledge of the condition of my people is limited to this city and the nearby villages. How much do I know of the state of affairs in those villages which are far away? I must travel right up to the frontiers of my kingdom.'

Accordingly, he rode a chariot driven by his most trusted charioteer and went out of the city. He travelled fast through deserted areas but slowly through villages, always alert to catch snatches of people's conversation. There was every reason for him to feel happy with what the people said.

As evening was approaching, he decided to begin his return journey to the palace. Between the kingdoms of Varanasi and Koshala there was a strip of land that could be called no man's land. That marked the frontier between the two kingdoms. Brahmadatakumar's charioteer avoided the habitations and took the frontier path so that he could drive fast. He came to a point where the road had become narrow with precipices on both sides. As the charioteer was driving his vehicle cautiously, he came face to face with another chariot coming from the opposite direction. Both the chariots stopped. Such was the situation that no chariot could pass unless one of them went back a few yards.

"My friend, please give way to us, for the one seated in this chariot is the King of Koshala," said the charioteer facing the chariot of the King of Varanasi.



“Greetings to your king, my friend, but it is you who should give way to us, for my master is the King of Varanasi,” replied the first.

“Greetings to the King of Varanasi. But there is no reason why he should have precedence over our king,” said the second, without any anger.

“Your observation is correct. Let’s see who between the two kings is senior in age. The younger must show respect to the older and let him pass first,” proposed the charioteer from Varanasi.

The charioteer from Koshala agreed with the suggestion. But it was found that both the kings were of the same age!

Then they looked into the ancestries of their dynasties. Well, both had an equally noble heritage behind them. Then the question of the size of their kingdoms was brought in. It was found that both Varanasi and Koshala were equal in area.

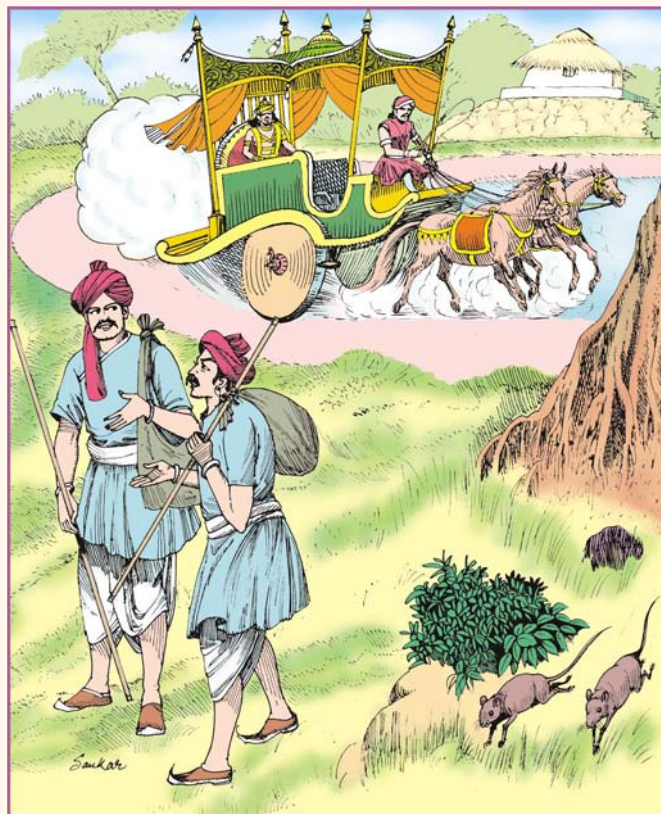
By and by they compared several other things, but to their great amusement they found that none was inferior to the other in any respect.

“My friend, forget about the material factors. Let us compare the nature of our noble rulers. What is the policy your king follows towards his subjects?” asked the charioteer from Varanasi, to which the Koshala charioteer replied:

*Ruthless towards the wicked, kind to the people
That’s my monarch’s policy, noble and simple.
A menace to the crook, to the honest tender,
Where’s a policy that’s nobler?*

“Is that all?” asked the charioteer from Varanasi. “Let me tell you about my king:

He conquers the wicked with peace



*And with tenderness the crook,
To all the subjects he is nice
Compassion and truth mould his outlook.”*

The moment the charioteer from Varanasi completed his statement, the King of Koshala got off his chariot and bowed to the King of Varanasi. The latter, too, came down and embraced the King of Koshala.

Brahmadattakumar was Bodhisattva or the spirit of the Buddha in one of his earlier lives. At the request of the King of Koshala, Brahmaduttakumar imparted to him several advices that would help him lead the life of an ideal ruler. Both the young monarchs became great friends.



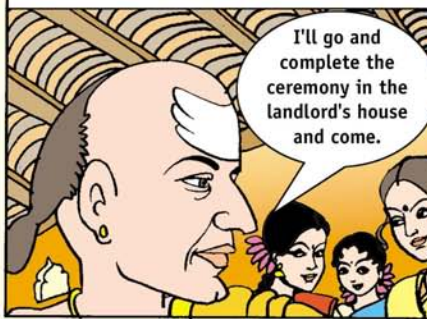
How powerful a mother’s arms can be was proved on December 2, 1927. A child named Marie Finster fell off a high building in Vienna and landed in the arms of her mother who happened to be on the pavement just then. The child was saved from certain death.

The flowers of the plant called the scarlet pimpernel can forecast weather. When they close up, rain or cloudy weather is indicated. Open petals mean fair weather for several hours to come.





Once upon a time, there lived a pious priest called Sadanand with his family in a village.

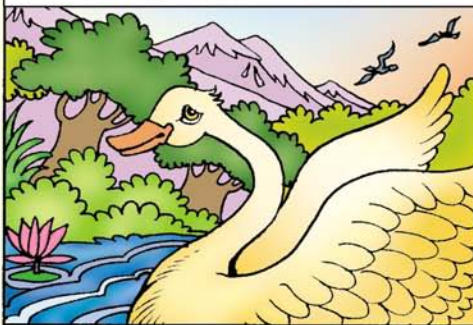


Oh God! What will I do? How will I survive in this world with my three daughters?

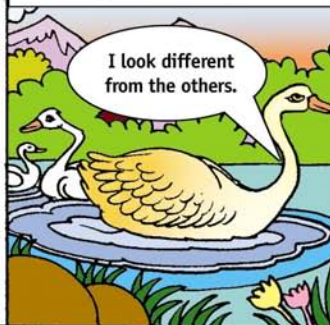
One day, the priest unexpectedly passed away. His wife was distraught.



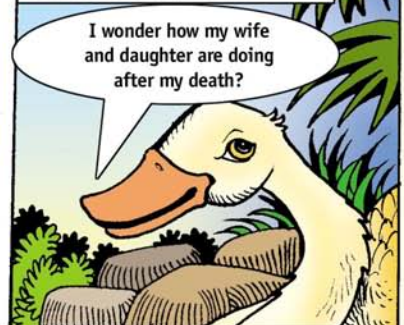
Sadanand was reborn as a swan. The swan lived in a beautiful lake far away from the village.



This swan was larger than the others and had gold feathers.



One day he sat meditating. Suddenly, he remembered his past life.



He flew to his village. He found his hut in ruins. His family lived in poverty and worked in a wealthy household for livelihood. The swan took pity on them. He wanted to help them.



He approached his wife.

Sukhidevi, I was your husband in my previous birth. I want to help you!

Oh my god! I cannot believe this.



The swan shed a feather.

Take that golden feather, sell it and use the money. I'll come back later.

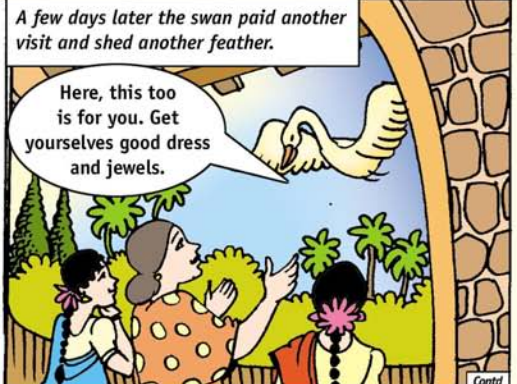


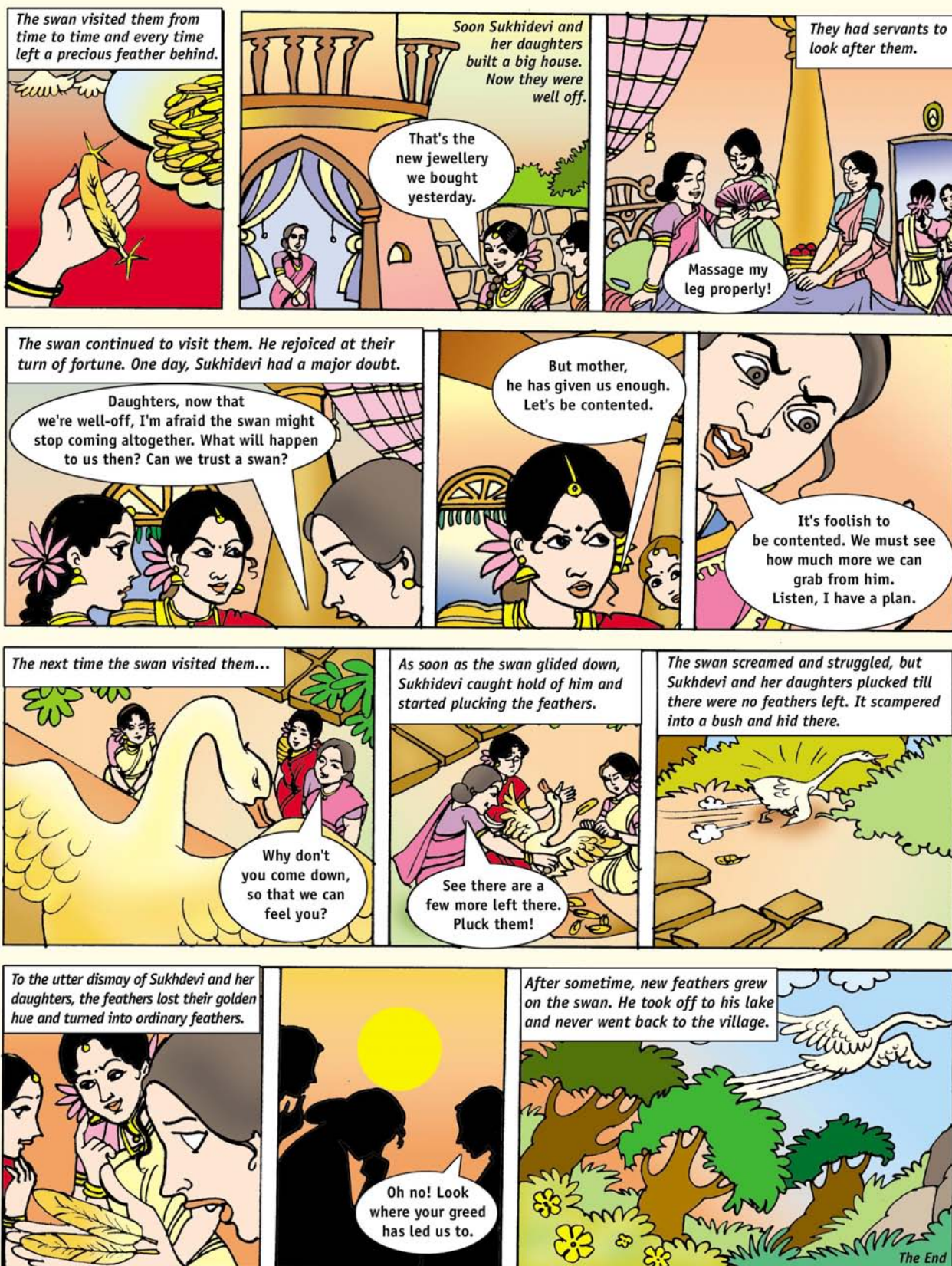
The swan flew away. Sukhidevi and her daughters were delighted. They did as advised by the swan.



A few days later the swan paid another visit and shed another feather.

Here, this too is for you. Get yourselves good dress and jewels.





OUT ON A LIMB

It was a lazy Saturday afternoon in the middle of summer and Vivek and Kiran had asked permission to go fishing. Their mother told them they could go, provided they would be back home before dark. The boys had some unfinished chores to complete before they could have dinner.

The sun was slowly sinking behind the hills when the boys gathered their bamboo fishing poles and the wicker basket with their small catch of fish. They should have left earlier, but they had forgotten the passage of time busy as they were.

Since they were late, Vivek, who at nine was two years older than Kiran, decided to take a short-cut across the thick woods instead of taking the *kutchha* road. He knew it was quicker and the boys were sort of familiar with the woods.

The only problem was that the woods opened into

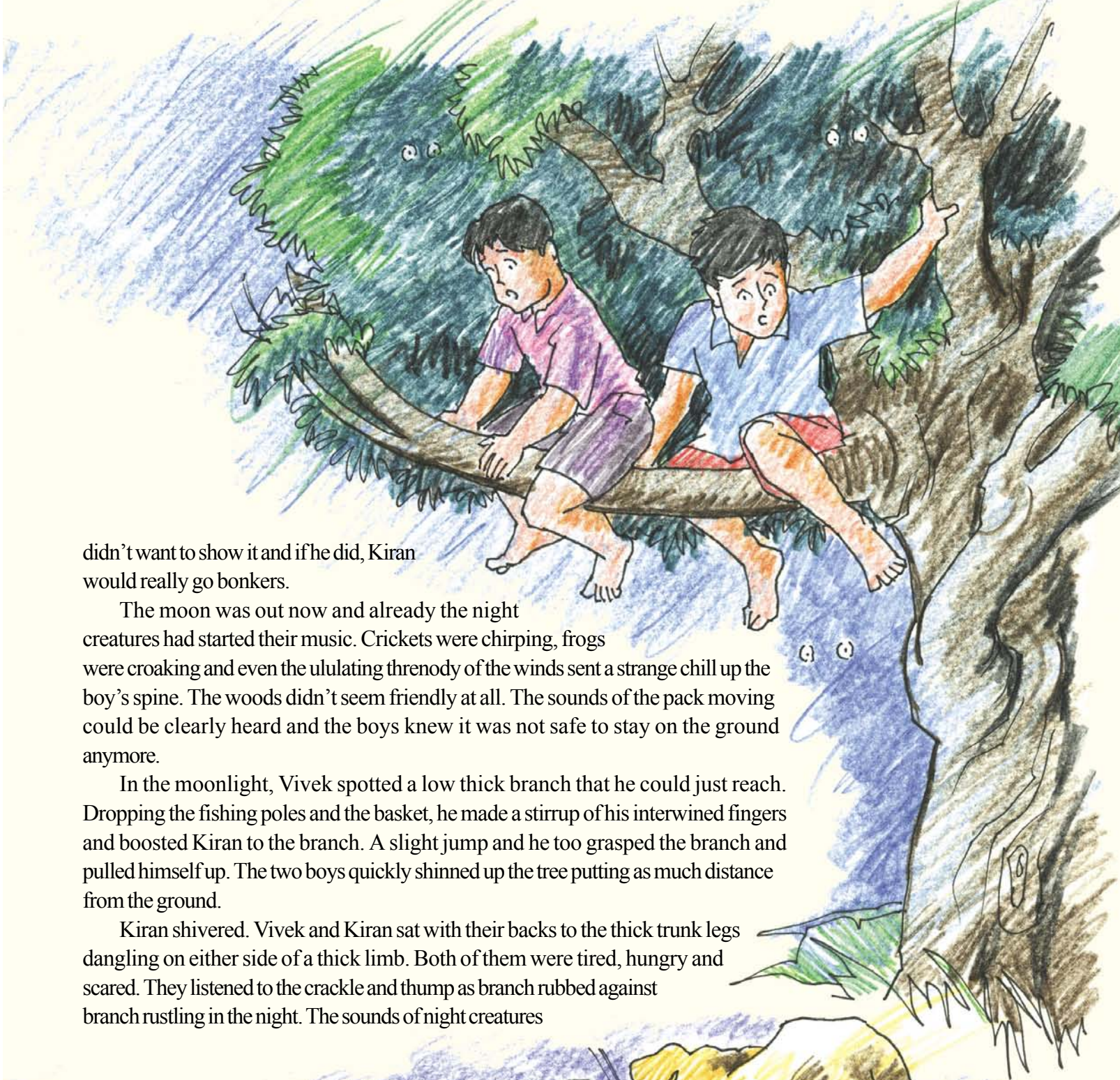
their neighbour Salim's land. He had a pack of huge Bhutias (Tibetan mastiff's) that he would let loose at night to keep the leopards and wolves away from his sheep. If they could reach Salim's farm, then their own house was a 'Cooee' distance away.

But as the two boys entered the woods, it became dark as the deodar trees blocked off the twilight light. They had to slow down, stopping to peer at the track more closely in the dim light. Soon they were meandering around and suddenly they could hear the deep baying of the dogs.

They had just been let loose and they would come straight to the woods to chase up the rabbits and quail, lifting their legs at trees to leave their scent. Vivek began to get worried. He could hardly see the tree in front of him and he didn't know which way to go.

Kiran was whimpering with fright and his teeth were chattering. Vivek did his best to comfort his younger brother. Not that Vivek wasn't afraid. He was, but he



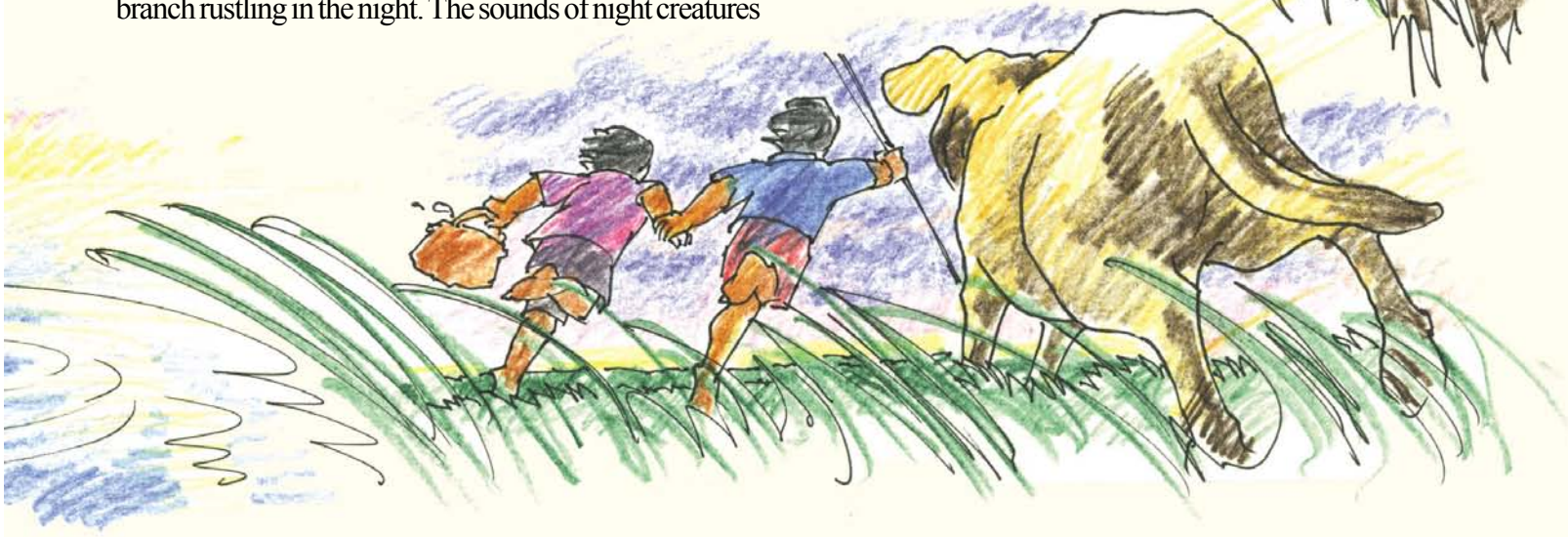


didn't want to show it and if he did, Kiran would really go bonkers.

The moon was out now and already the night creatures had started their music. Crickets were chirping, frogs were croaking and even the ululating threnody of the winds sent a strange chill up the boy's spine. The woods didn't seem friendly at all. The sounds of the pack moving could be clearly heard and the boys knew it was not safe to stay on the ground anymore.

In the moonlight, Vivek spotted a low thick branch that he could just reach. Dropping the fishing poles and the basket, he made a stirrup of his intertwined fingers and boosted Kiran to the branch. A slight jump and he too grasped the branch and pulled himself up. The two boys quickly shinned up the tree putting as much distance from the ground.

Kiran shivered. Vivek and Kiran sat with their backs to the thick trunk legs dangling on either side of a thick limb. Both of them were tired, hungry and scared. They listened to the crackle and thump as branch rubbed against branch rustling in the night. The sounds of night creatures





Teacher : Raju, where are the Himalayas?

Raju : I do not know ma'am.

Teacher : Stand upon the bench !

Raju : I still can't see it, ma'am.



Son : Daddy, when did you go to Egypt?

Daddy : No, son, I never visited that country.

Son : Then, from where did you get mummy?

moving in the dark was magnified a thousand times to their frightened ears. By now even Vivek was finding it difficult to bolster Kiran and he was trying hard not to cry himself. Both of them longed for the safety and comfort of home.

Just then they heard it. A low whisper at first. They strained their ears listening. They heard it again — only louder. It was a voice....and it sounded as if it were calling out to them, asking them something. It was not a typical forest sound, it was deeper somehow, and it sounded like a person...and the voice sounded almost, but not quite familiar.

“Whoooooooo....?”

Kiran became excited.

“Who-o-o-o? Who-o-o-o?”

Somebody was definitely out there calling to them and wanting to know who they were. Perhaps Salim was taking a walk with his dogs. When the voice called out a third time “Whoooooooo?” both boys responded simultaneously: “Vivek and Kiran.”

“Who-o-o-o???” the mysterious voice asked again.

Again the boys replied.

“Vivek and Kiran!”

Meanwhile, back home, the boys’ parents were getting worried. Night in the hills wasn’t very safe and even the adults were careful of meeting jungle denizens like a stray bear or a wolf pack. Their father was busy milking the cows, a chore Vivek should have done. As his wife came running into the cowshed, he saw concern on her face. He set the milk pail aside and leaning heavily on one knee got up, wincing at the pain from his

arthritic knee. He tried to comfort his wife by reminding her that the boys knew the way around and they would be back soon. But deep inside he too was beginning to worry. He then took his walking cane and went to another of his neighbour to see if the boys had gone there. Meanwhile, the boy’s mother had called up various people to ask for their help to search for the boys.

Salim and his two older sons joined the large search party that had collected outside the house. One of them said he would send his son to the village square to see if the boys had wandered there.

The search party were allotted various places to look for the boys – the woods, the brook where the boys had gone fishing (in case they had fallen in the stream), other farms, and so on. They fanned out in a long broken line all within a “Cooooee” distance to inform each other. Some had brought their dogs on leashes to track the boys as well as to keep the wild animals at bay.

The boy’s father stayed in the main party that was searching the woods. Their torches and lanterns lit up a hazy path. Halfway into the woods, the group stopped dead still. Off in the distance, they heard a voice calling “Who-o-o! Who-o-o-o!” followed by a faint “Vivek and Kiran!”

“Huh, what???” they asked themselves.

There it was again. “Who-o-o-o! Who-o-o-o!” followed by “Vivek and Kiran!”

The ragged party broke up as they started running towards the voices while the dogs started barking and straining at the leashes, the anxiety of the party and the

noise exciting them. Back at the tree, the two boys could hear rustling and crashing through the underbrush. Something...was moving through the woods, coming in their direction. Maybe Salim's dogs. . .or maybe something scarier!

Again they heard the strange voice calling to them "Who-o-o-?" The kids began yelling at the top of their voice, "Vivek and Kiran!" hoping to frighten off whatever was making that noise with their screaming.

The rustling became louder. They could see some flashes of something bobbing and weaving in several places. The boys shivered in the tree, their imagination running wild with thoughts of fire-breathing monsters and ghosts.

"Whooooooo???" came the voice again and *this* time the voice was directly overhead and they heard a swishing noise. Kiran nearly fell off the tree and also unseated Vivek when he grasped at Vivek's shirt. Luckily Vivek was sitting at the vee of a branch and had a better seat. The boys screamed at the top of their lungs:

"VIVEK AND KIRAN. THAT'S WHO!!!"

At that moment, the lead party burst through the underbush and their lanterns highlighted the two boys in the tree hanging onto for all they were worth.

"It's DAD! DAD! We are up here!" the boys shouted.

The sight of the two kids were a sight for sore eyes for the party and especially their father. The lead man climbed the tree and hoisted them down and they leaped from his arms into the outstretched arms of their father.

"We got 'em!" one of the men called out and as the others caught up, there was backthumping and shouting and cheering among the men.

The searchers were relieved to find that the boys were none the worse for wear - - just tired and very hungry. One of the other men lifted the boys and hoisted them piggy-back.

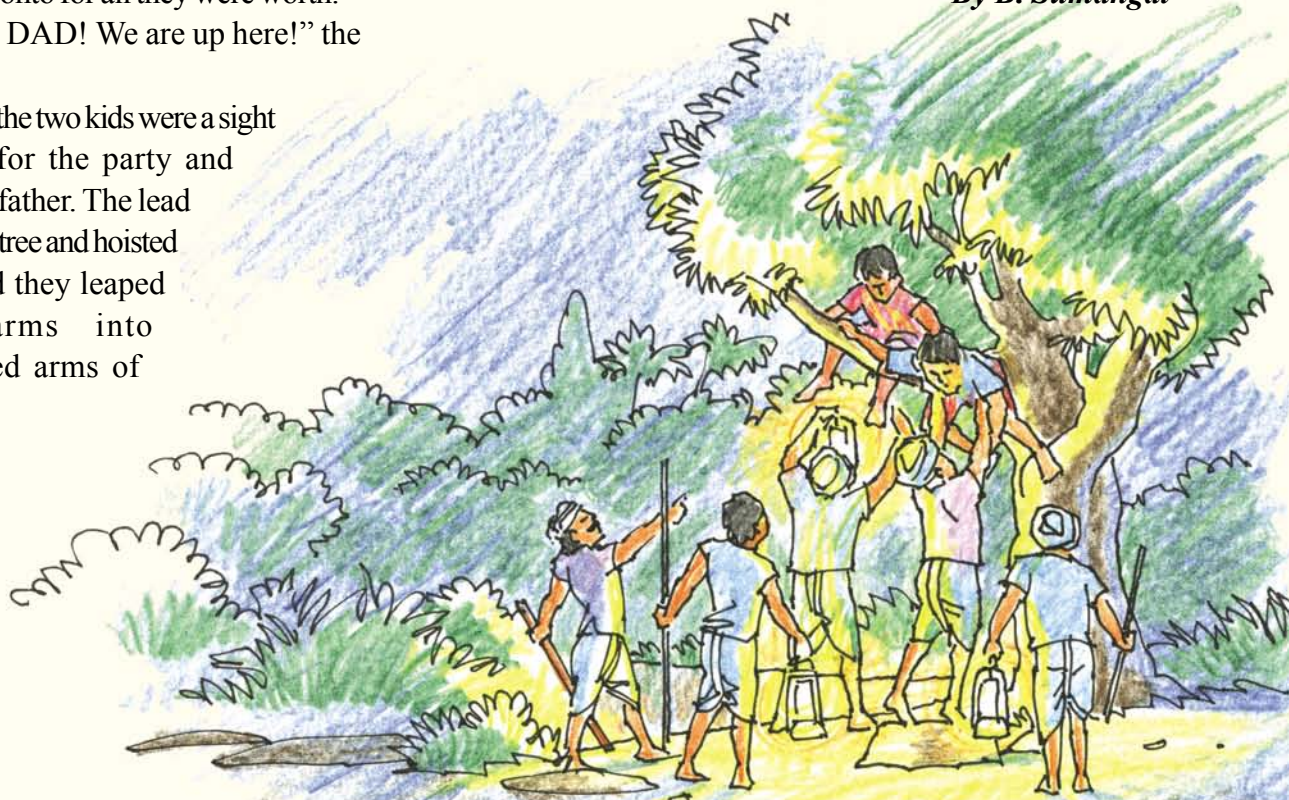
Soon the raucous crowd reached the boys' house. Their mother rushed out, joyous tears streaming down her cheeks and hugged the boys tight. They might get scolded later, but right now what was important to their mother was that her boys were alive and safe.

As the party sat drinking hot tea prepared by the boys' mother, the men told her about the voice that kept calling "Who-o-o-o?! Who-o-o-o?!" and how the boys kept answering it.

As they sat there, everyone knew that whatever it was that had prompted the boys to answer that old owl every time he hooted Whoooo?, had almost certainly saved their lives, because those voices, calling out in the night, were the only thing that could have led the rescue party right to them.

"Who-o-o-o?! Who-o-o-o?!"

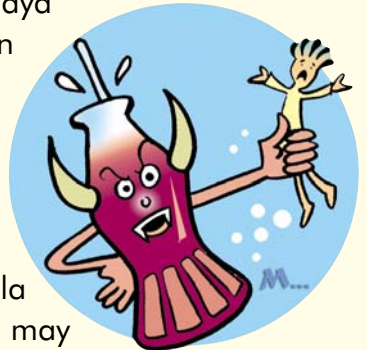
- By B. Sumangal



Children IN THE NEWS

She cautioned against Cola

S. Sarika is a 11th Standard student of the Kendriya Vidyalaya in Pangode in Trivandrum. Three years ago, she took part in the annual inter-school Science Exhibition and her project was titled "Pepsi—a health hazard", a subject which has attracted public attention in recent times. With the help of facts and figures, Sarika had revealed the ill-effects of some of the popular bottled drinks on human teeth. Some of her other findings were: a glass of CocaCola is capable of singeing one's intestines; a 500ml bottle of Cola contains 38mg of caffeine; if a woman takes in 300mg caffeine, she may become barren; the sugar content in a bottle of Pepsi is equal to the sugar contained in a whole packet of toffees. She discloses that Hollywood star Michael J.Fox, who was the brand ambassador of Diet Pepsi, was a victim of the Parkinson's Disease. Sarika's project was given the first place in the southern zone Science Exhibition held this year in Chennai.



Young playback singer

Subhiksha Rangarajan first sang for a movie when she was 11, and that was three years ago. People who have seen movies like *Lagaan*, *Pukar*, and *Dum Dum Dum* would be familiar with her voice and songs. She represented India at the Young Music Ambassadors programme held in Colorado, USA, early this year. Soon afterwards she released her first album. Equally good at both Hindustani and Carnatic music, Subhiksha has worked with composers like Ilayaraja, Karthik Raja and Yuvan Shankar Raja.



A boy medico

Sho Yano is a student in a medical college at the University of Chicago. At his age (12), he is the youngest in the University to gain admission to study Medicine. In his educational career till now, Yano has often been described as a prodigy or a little genius. The *Guinness Book of World Records* has an entry for a 17-year-old graduate from a medical college in New York in 1995. Yano is not aiming at rewriting that record. He stays in the University campus with his mother and seven year old sister Sayuri, who has even now set her sight on becoming a cardiologist.





*Anubha
Mohanty
Cuttack*



*Aishwarya
Ganesan
Bhopal*

Children's Special

From darkness to light

Dark was the night. Moonless was the sky and lightless was the house. The night had reached its full maturity and I was fast asleep. And then a sound struck me. That was the sound of the clock striking twelve, welcoming midnight.

Just then I happened to see two figures approaching my room. I was struck with fear. My mind hovered over the frightening tales of ghosts and thieves, and my thoughts took the form of many imaginary figures. Because, at midnight only ghosts and thieves haunt the houses. Surely it

was one of them and my end was near. I was so much overtaken and paralysed with fear that I could not dare open my eyes. I tried hard to sleep, but it (sleep) receded farther and farther from me.

I could then hear the sound of music. The tune surely came from a tape-recorder. But how could a tape-recorder work when there was no current? And then appeared a number of faint lights with those two figures advancing into the room.

The sound, the light, and the two apparitions during the power-cut only made the atmosphere more eerie and accelerated my heart-throb. I was startled. But only for a while. The sound that appeared infernal a little while ago was really a sweet one coming from the tape-recorder that had been put to action with battery. It sang, "Happy Birthday to You".

The light that I thought as weird was a combination of thirteen lighted candles.

And the two figures were none other than my mummy and papa. With them was the tape-recorder, the candles on a tray, and the cake to celebrate my thirteenth birthday. The midnight celebrated the morning of my birth. The fear of the grave gave way to feelings of the cradle.



A great birthday

It was nearly 9 at night. Ruchi and Deepak's parents had gone out. The children were at home with their Grandmother. It was the month of November, and tomorrow, the 20th, was Grandma's birthday. She was to be 89 years old. The children insisted on her telling them a story. Grandma refused at first, but then got ready.

"Children, when I was young, I also listened to stories from my Grandma. She once told me the story of a lady who was ill-natured, but love changed her," said Grandma in her soft voice and narrated the story. "Once there lived a lady, named Mary Carmel, with her husband. She was a cheerful woman. Her husband was a Colonel in the army. Unfortunately, he died in war. She had no

children, so she was left alone in the house. She disliked everyone, though others loved her deeply."

Grandma cleared her throat and continued, "On anyone's birthday she used to lock herself up in the house and make strange excuses when invited."

Then, one day, she decided to go out. Do you know when? On her own birthday! Everyone greeted her warmly, but no one knew it was her birthday, so they only said, "A hearty good morning, Mrs. Carmel." That made her feel sad.

Now she knew how the others felt when she ignored them. She went to the churches and parks. Everywhere she noticed how much everyone loved her.

She sat on a bench on the road side crying. She said to herself, 'Oh! God what a fool I was when I didn't understand their love. Now, today, when it is my birthday, no one can share my feelings with me.' She sat there till 8," said Grandma.

Grandma again sipped water to keep her throat wet and went on. She stared at the watch, which indicated the time 8 o'clock and went home. After entering her house, she was surprised to see everyone standing with gifts in hand.

They led her to a table full of goodies and a cake in front. She broke down and started to cry. She asked everyone to forgive her and

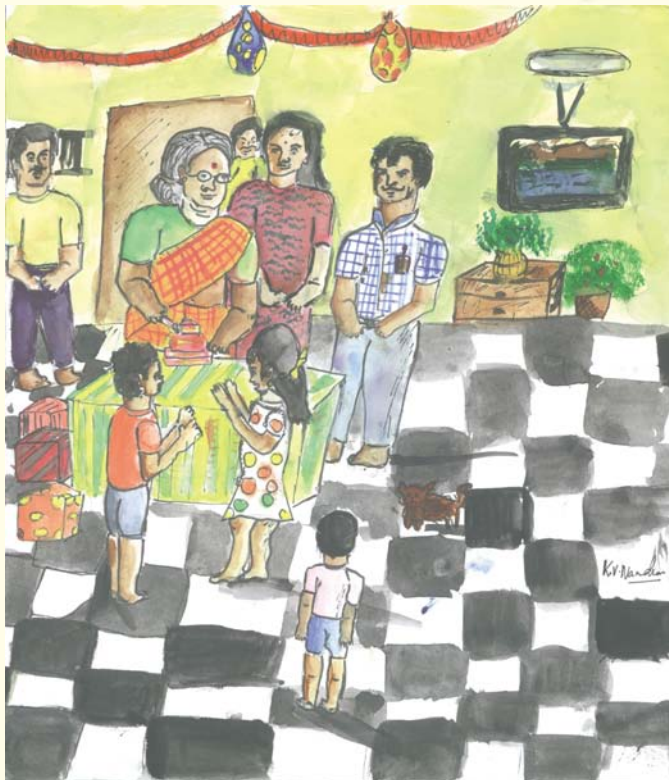


*Priyam
Parashar
Jabalpur*



*K.V. Nandhan
Chennai*





promised to be kind. Everyone sang the Birthday carol as she cut the cake. From that day onwards, she was seen at every party and gathering. Did you like the story, children?" asked Grandma.

"Yes Grandma, very, very much," said the

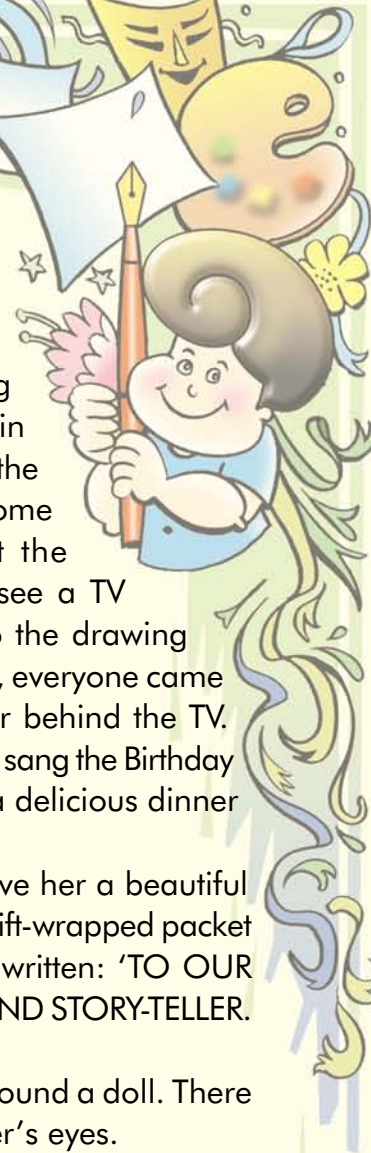
children.

As their parents had by now come in, the children wished good night to Grandma and went to sleep.

The next day everything went the same till 9 o'clock in the night. Children came into the drawing room at 9, made some arrangements and put out the lights. Grandma wanted to see a TV programme, so she came to the drawing room. As she put on the lights, everyone came from behind the cupboard or behind the TV. They brought a cake to her and sang the Birthday carol for her. They gave her a delicious dinner and then came the presents.

The children's parents gave her a beautiful scarf. The children brought a gift-wrapped packet and gave it to her on it was written: 'TO OUR DEAR 89 YEAR OLD FRIEND AND STORY-TELLER. RUCHI AND DEEPAK'.

Grandma opened it and found a doll. There were tears of happiness in her's eyes.



THE LAST RESORT

Madhav of Madanpuri called on his friend Narayan of Nayanpuri. He had taken with him two beautiful framed pictures of gods, as Narayan had a fancy for such pictures. And he wished to put them up on the wall then and there. He called his son. "Go and get the hammer from our neighbour."

The boy came back and said, "They don't have a hammer."

"Is it so? All right, try at the house this side."

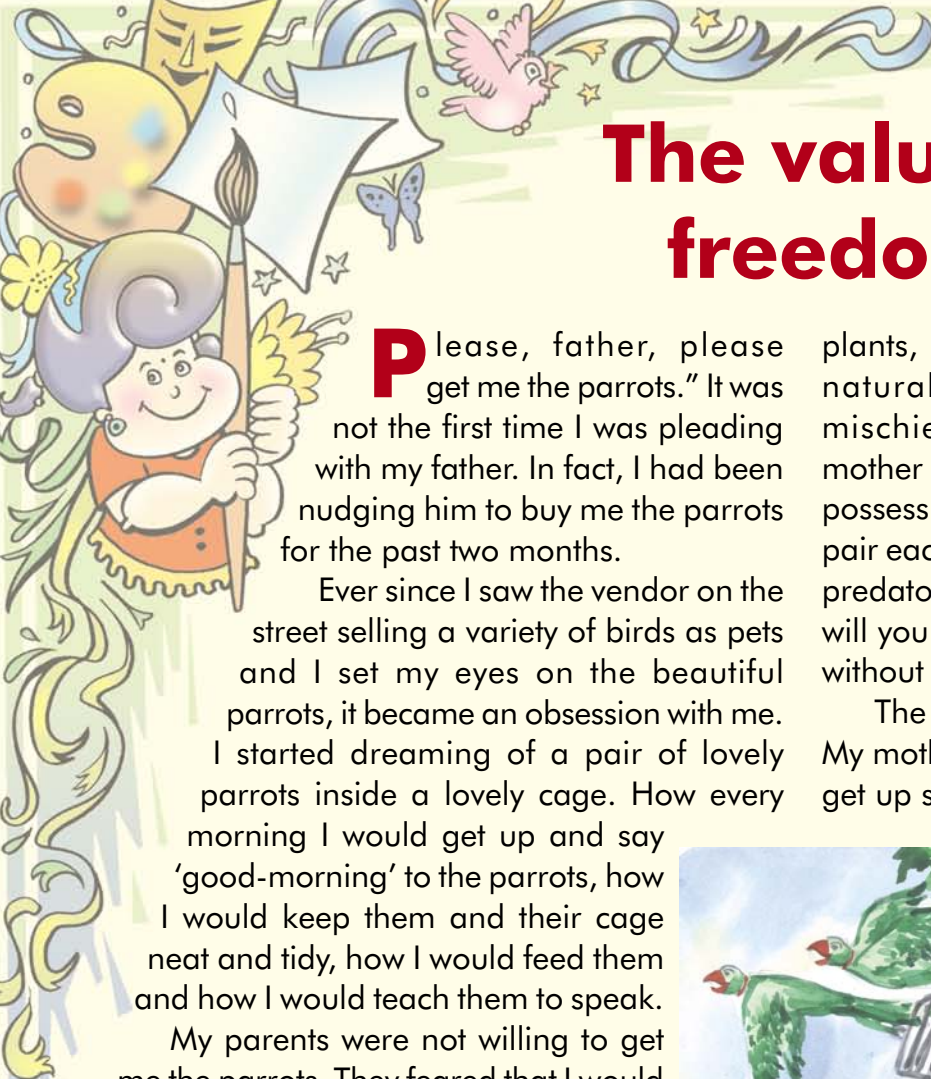
The boy once again returned empty-handed. "They also don't have a hammer."

"The house opposite may have a hammer," said Narayan and sent the boy out for a third time. The boy came back and said, "They, too, don't have a hammer."

"See that!" remarked Narayan, turning to Madhav. "Nobody here wants to help another. A whole selfish lot!" He then told his son, "Go and get the hammer from my tool-box."

Madhav had to strain to control his laughter.





The value of freedom



*P. Karthik
Ramaswamy
Chennai*

Please, father, please get me the parrots." It was not the first time I was pleading with my father. In fact, I had been nudging him to buy me the parrots for the past two months.

Ever since I saw the vendor on the street selling a variety of birds as pets and I set my eyes on the beautiful parrots, it became an obsession with me. I started dreaming of a pair of lovely parrots inside a lovely cage. How every morning I would get up and say 'good-morning' to the parrots, how I would keep them and their cage neat and tidy, how I would feed them and how I would teach them to speak.

My parents were not willing to get me the parrots. They feared that I would neglect my studies. Also, keeping birds would create disturbances, they argued. But I was adamant and, finally, my father gave in. The very next day, he took me to the vendor. After careful observation and discussion with my father, I selected the most lovely pair of parrots—lustrous green in colour, with coral red beaks and legs, dancing eyes, a ringing smooth voice—so sweet and cute!

Soon I was going home carrying the cage. My face was gleaming when my friends in the neighbourhood saw me—the proud owner of the most beautiful pair of parrots!

After much discussion with my mother, I hung the cage in the rearside balcony, where we kept many potted

plants, so that the birds had a natural surrounding. With a mischievous smile, I told my mother in a whisper, "I've another dream, to possess an aquarium with a pair of gold fish, a pair each of white molly and red molly, a pair of predators, and a pair of black gold fish. When will you get me that?" My mother left the place without saying a word.

The next day, I was the first person to get up. My mother told me that she had never seen me get up so early. I went straight to the parrots - I





*Sayan
Chanda
Kolkata*

had named them 'Tinu' and 'Minu' - and said 'Good Morning' to them, fed them a bowl of fruits and nuts. Then I got ready to go to school. In the evening, I spent some time playing with Tinu and Minu, before sitting to complete my home work and studies. I was

so excited and happy.

Three days passed. The birds were getting accustomed to the new surroundings. Though they responded well to all my calls, I still felt I saw a pleading look in their eyes. Or was it my imagination?

On the fourth night, something strange happened. I had an important assignment to complete. Though it was late in the night, I still fought against sleep, to finish the work on hand. Suddenly, I heard Tinu and Minu banging the cage. "Please give us freedom! Please give us freedom!" they were earnestly pleading. There were tears in their eyes. I could bear it no longer. "Forgive me, dear Tinu and Minu! Please forgive

me," I sobbed aloud.

"What's the problem?" my mother shook me. I sat up startled. Though it was a dream, I had learnt my lesson. The very next day, I took Tinu and Minu to the nearby park and released them from the cage. I still remember the grateful look in their eyes!

"Would you like to have the aquarium, dear?" my mother asked me mockingly.

"No, ma, no more pets in my life. Let the fish swim freely in rivers and ponds, wherever they are. But not inside a glass cage. And ma! Do you know what I am going to do with my pocket money hereafter? When I have saved enough, I shall buy a caged bird or a chained animal, and release it into freedom!" How proud my mother felt!

A REVEALING QUESTION

Gopal went to the mental hospital to enquire about one of his relations undergoing treatment there. He waited in the visitors room till the attendants could go and fetch his relation. Soon a man came and joined him on the bench he was sitting. "Have you also come to meet a patient?" asked Gopal.

"I've been here for the last four months," replied the man. "My relations brought me here saying I was mentally deranged."

"But you look quite normal," said Gopal, to put him at ease.

"I'm afraid, the treatment given here has only worsened my condition," the man added, sadly. "Could I ask you something? Do you like wooden sandals or leather slippers more?"

"Of course, leather slippers," replied Gopal.

"And how would you like them, fried or boiled?"



Living Objects



*Pratha
Umesh Mehta
Goa*

There was a time when plants were considered inanimate objects. Later, it was shown by scientists that plants, too, have life. Now no one disputes that fact. When Dadaji told Jinal about this, she thought - 'Now what we consider lifeless objects may also be proved full of life. We consider them lifeless out of sheer ignorance.'

Therefore, Jinal got interested in certain objects and she tried to treat them

cry, dear." Jinal looked around. There were only the wooden cupboard, tubelight, fan, wall clock, clothes, suit cases, and so many little-big things around. Jinal wondered where the voice had come from.

As she could not get to the source of the voice, she looked out of the window. Jinal thought, maybe someone was playing a joke with her. So, she checked all the rooms. There was only Dadaji in the house and he was in deep sleep, snoring heavily. Now Jinal thought,

maybe she imagined someone or something speaking or there was a ghost whispering something. Jinal did not believe in ghosts but still she started trembling with fear. Again, tears came down her eyes. "Don't cry, my dear," came the voice again.

Jinal, looking around, asked, "Who are you? Where are you?"

"I'm here, my dear, in front of you."

"Who? Where?"

"I'm what you call the wind."

Jinal jumped up in ecstasy. She tried to hug the wind. "Oh, Pawandada, your voice is so sweet. Can you really speak?"

"Of course, my dear child."

"Then why do people think that you are inanimate, you don't have feelings, and that you just cannot talk?"

"That's because they are too preoccupied with themselves to hear what we speak."

"Oh, is that so?"

"Then how am I able to hear you?"

"That is because you are a sweet, loving,



as living beings. Initially, there was no breakthrough. Stone maintained a stony silence, however hard Jinal tried to converse with it. Wood remained wooden when Jinal tried to know about its feelings. The more Jinal tried, the more stubborn was the response.

At last, Jinal realised her mistake and she started sobbing. Tears started flowing down her pink cheeks. Suddenly she heard a voice: "Don't



**Neha
Adiga
Bangalore**

caring and sensitive child. Bye for now. I've to keep moving."

"Yes, yes, but do keep coming to chat with me."

Now Jinal was so full of joy. She wondered whether it was a dream. To make sure it was a reality, she called out. "Is anyone

willing to chat with me?"

"Yes, I am," said the tiny doll lying on the bed.

"Hey, dolly! You can also talk? Oh, great God, I never knew. Whenever I'm angry, I throw you anywhere. Doesn't that hurt you?"

"Yes, it does hurt me a lot."

"Oh, I'm really very sorry. I shall never do that again. Please forgive me."

Jinal applied ointment on the dolly's body. They played, laughed, talked and had a wonderful time together. But soon the doorbell rang. Jinal went out to open the door. Her parents had arrived. As Jinal went back to her room, the doll had turned lifeless.

Jinal thought aloud: 'Maybe we human beings are so insensitive and callous about the world around us that we turn living beings into lifeless objects.'



GOPAL'S GUESSES

Gopal suffered a loss of memory. He was admitted to hospital. After some days, the doctor told him, "Gopal, you're now all right, and you may go home." He was happy that he did not have to stay in the hospital for long.

As he neared his village, he saw someone sitting beneath a huge banyan tree. His face looked familiar, but Gopal could not remember his name. He went up to him. "I've met you before, perhaps at the wedding in Parasuram's house?" "I'm afraid not," said the stranger.

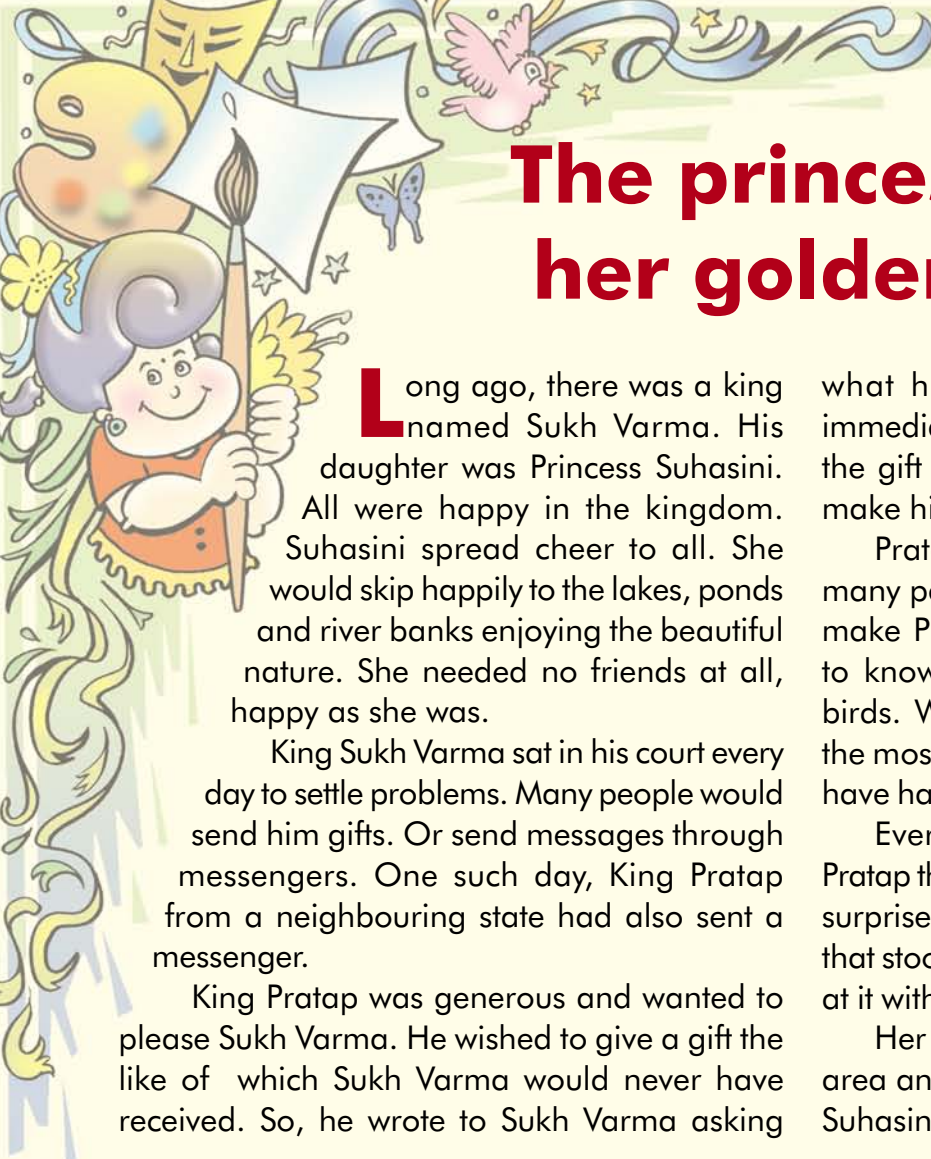
"Then it could be at the 60th birthday celebrations of Pasupathi?" Gopal suggested.

"No." Again a reply in the negative.

"I now know, it was at the weekly shandy in the neighbouring village," Gopal said quite confidently.

"You haven't been cured of your illness, Gopal!" the man responded. "I'm your uncle Krishnayya." He then took Gopal back to the hospital.





The princess and her golden bird



*Krithika
Sugavanam
Chennai*

Long ago, there was a king named Sukh Varma. His daughter was Princess Suhasini. All were happy in the kingdom. Suhasini spread cheer to all. She would skip happily to the lakes, ponds and river banks enjoying the beautiful nature. She needed no friends at all, happy as she was.

King Sukh Varma sat in his court every day to settle problems. Many people would send him gifts. Or send messages through messengers. One such day, King Pratap from a neighbouring state had also sent a messenger.

King Pratap was generous and wanted to please Sukh Varma. He wished to give a gift the like of which Sukh Varma would never have received. So, he wrote to Sukh Varma asking

what he would like. The king immediately replied to Pratap that the gift he most wanted was a gift that would make his daughter very happy.

Pratap was pleased. He immediately sent many people in disguise to find out what would make Princess Suhasini happy. He soon came to know that the princess loved animals and birds. With great difficulty, Pratap sent one of the most beautiful gifts the princess would never have had ever received.

Everybody crowded around the gift from Pratap that had reached the kingdom. Many were surprised at the sight of the beautiful golden bird that stood in a golden cage. The princess looked at it with great wonder.

Her maid took the bird to the princess's play area and the cage was hung in a corner. When Suhasini wanted to play with the bird, the bird

would be released and after playing, the bird would be put back into the cage. Soon the princess and the bird were the best of friends. At the wave of her hand the bird used to enter the cage and get locked up until the next day when the princess would come to play with it.

But soon, the bird lost interest in play. Suhasini noticed the change in the bird and asked her maid about it. The princess was told that just like how people enjoyed the outdoors, birds enjoyed, too. All birds wanted to fly and not caged.



CHANDAMAMA PRESENTS

CHILKA LAKE



by MANOJ DAS

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Orissa
The Soul of India

Orissa : miles & miles of creativity



The first Creator was God. Man comes next. Creativity is not just the bridesmaid of the elite and the well-read. It is a religion for the masses, in one coastal corner of India called Orissa. Truly does Orissa revel in the glory of her exquisite handicrafts. The artistry of the eye and the deftness of fingers culminate in exquisite filigree work, which is undoubtedly, the pride of Utkal, now Orissa.

The legacy of creativity, handed down from generation to generation is not only seen in the colourful canopies and beach umbrellas, but also in Orissa's folk Painting. Hornwork reaches it's crowning climax in the long-legged stork. Brass and bell metal-works are the be-all and end-all of creative imagination. That is not the end of it all. In short, Orissa is a poem which one and all must read time after time.



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CHILIKA LAKE



There are moments when the sky is splattered with colourful dots. Below, the blue waters reflect them. For a while you are not sure whether you are dreaming or looking at a real phenomenon. By and by you become one with the scene. Indeed, if you can do so, you feel the joy of freedom, of infinity, of adventure, and of faith. For, you are there to welcome the symbols of all these qualities. They are birds coming from not only our neighbourhood of Bangladesh or Nepal, but distant and still more distant lands - Australia, Siberia, so on and so forth. Year after year they visit the great lake they are so fond of, a little before the winter sets in. They venture to fly over villages

and towns, hills and forests for thousands of miles. They exercise their freedom of movement through infinity. And, no doubt, they come with faith - faith in the good old lake which receives them warmly and, last but not the least, faith in the human beings who are around the lake. If once in a while their faith is betrayed, if a pocher kills a couple of them, they are sad, but they renew their faith and expect man to learn from their optimism.

This happens at Lake Chilika, the largest lake in India, situated in Orissa, about 100 km from Bhubaneswar, the capital of the State. Covering an area of nearly 1,200 square kilometres, this marvel of nature has many faces. We have spoken of one, but in a stormy weather the vast expanse of water can present an awe-inspiring scene, its



turbulent waves rising high, and the hills and the hamlets on its numerous isles appearing and disappearing like a mirage. In moonlit nights it is like a fairytale domain, its blue surface sporting a supernatural hue and its millions of ripples becoming tiny flames of a golden fire.

It is generally said that its water is salty. But one may take that statement with a pinch of salt! There are seasons when the rivers like the Daya, Bhargavi, Luna, and the Gandhavati, which merge in the lake, pour so much of their water into it and with such robust force and speed that the salt water takes a back-seat, even if it is not fully pushed away into the sea. In any case, the heart of Chilika is not salty, for the well on its premier isle, Kalijai, has normal sweet water.

But the salt water did have

THE BLUE LAGOON

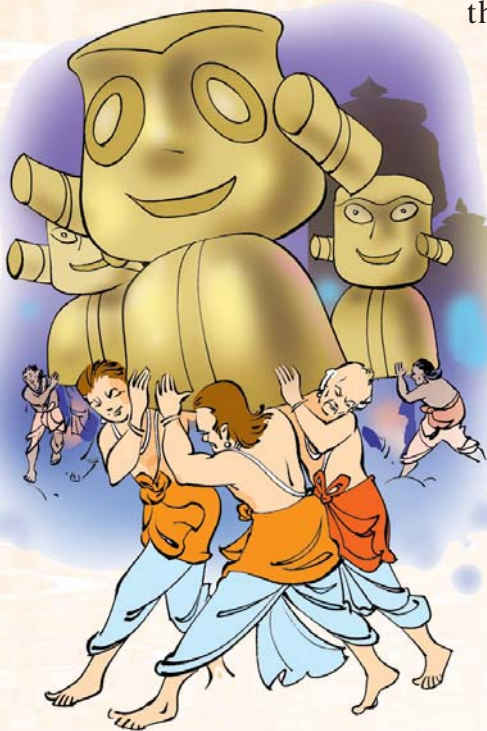
Spread over 1,100 sq. km. Chilika is India's largest brackish water inland lake. Interspersed with islands, the lake is rich in aquatic fauna and is a bird watcher's delight. The lake is encircled by hills all along its arched shape, and its colour changes with the passing clouds overhead and the shifting sun. Chilika is nestled in the heart of Orissa's coastal district stretching across Puri, Khurda and Ganjam. The Bay of Bengal flows in through a narrow mouth forming an enormous lagoon of brackish water.

The placid waters of the lake comprise diverse flora and fauna ranging from the threatened, vulnerable and endangered species. Chilika lake boasts of 150 species of birds, including the Dowitcher, one of the least known Asian shorebirds, and the Spoonbill Sandpiper, one of the rarest. As a result, Chilika was declared a national sanctuary in 1987.

a claim on the lake. After all, the lake is a contribution by the sea. It remains connected with the sea, importing from it numerous varieties of fish, crabs, etc, which provide for the villagers around it their livelihood. Probably a millennium ago, some natural upheaval must have cut this lake out of the sea two sub-ranges of hills guarding on both sides its charming link with the sea.

Folklore, of course, has its own version of the origin of the lake. Once when some pirates or invaders approached the shore with their ships in order to plunder the shrine of Lord

Jagannath at Puri, the priests escaped in time along with the deities and all the valuables treasured in the temple, and went into some hiding. What is more, even the people of the temple-city deserted it. On reaching their target with great expectations, it is said that the invaders practically found nothing.



But who warned the people of the invasion? The gang had come stealthily at night! Someone told the chief of the invaders that it was the sea that notified the priests about the impending attack, through its roars. One of the priests was capable of deciphering the language of the roars.

The gang cursed and abused the sea, standing on its shore, before proceeding to their ships. Instantly, the sea rose high and the mountainous tides broke in a sort of explosion on the insolent gang. It perished. Its ships shattered, and sank.

Thereafter the sea receded, but leaving a patch of it behind, a permanent blessing for the people.

It seems the lake was larger than what it is today some centuries ago, facilitating a

Winter is the loveliest time at Chilika with thousands of migratory birds flying in from as far as Siberia for the cold winter months. The surrounding hills and sandy stretches abound in cheetals, blackbucks, monkeys, fishing cats, mongoose and porcupines. Snakes and turtles, lizards and cobras inhabit the surrounding beach area and wooded undergrowth. One can even watch dolphins at Satapara island located at the confluence of the lake and sea.

Nalbana, one of the biggest islands, is a 10km stretch of marsh that lies submerged during the four or five monsoon months. A few estuarine turtles and snakes are found here along with species of dolphins, otters, bats and sloth bears on the hills.

Around 150 species of fish and prawns have been recorded. In 1917, a rare reptile, the limbless skink (a type of lizard) was discovered for the first time in the loose soil of the Barakudia island.

Boating and cruising facilities are available here. The Orissa Tourism Department even organises water sports at Barakul.

prosperous port. Ships from distant lands visited it, as can be ascertained from the records left by the Greek traveller Ptolemy who came to India in the 4th century B.C. Hundreds of years later, the port was visited by yet another illustrious traveller, Hiuen Tsang of China. He refers to the port as Chellitato - which can be related to the name Chilika. Some scholars say that the ancient name of the port was Dantapura, of which we read in the Buddhist literature. There is strong evidence in favour of these theories. Of the hundred or so small and big isles - most of them are uninhabited rocks - one is known as Deepa Pahad or the Lamp Hill. At night the fire that burnt on it served as the signal for the incoming ships.

Parikud is the biggest of all the isles. In fact it was an island-kingdom till the other day, ruled by a feudal lord, a



Raja. However, an isle which is a pilgrim centre is famous as Kalijai. At a distance of some 16 km from Balugan, a fine tourist spot on the lake, the isle has for its solitary attraction a temple dedicated to the deity Kalijai. As we all know, Kali is a certain form of Mother-goddess, widely worshipped. But how was Jai affixed to the name? There are two theories about it. The goddess was the presiding deity of the state of Parikud which had a very small army to protect itself. Once a more powerful Raja threatened to invade Parikud and annex it. The Raja of Parikud prayed to the deity to protect his state from the enemy.

The army of the invader reached the banks of the lake at night ready to set sail for their target in the morning. But, as the day broke out, the enemy, to its

ATTRACTIONS WITHIN THE LAKE

Birds Island:

This island is a haven for resident and migratory birds and is a bird-watcher's paradise.

Kalijai Island:

Kalijai Island is home to the Goddess Kalijai. The temple hosts a huge fair on Makar Sankranti every year. It is also a famous picnic spot.

Satapara:

Satapara is a retreat on Chilika lake near the confluence of the lake with the sea. It is an ideal spot to enjoy Chilika. The sight of dolphins round the year and abundance of migratory and resident birds in winter make it a preferred vacation spot to enjoy nature. Boating facilities are also available at Satapara.



utter dismay, noticed tens of thousands of soldiers arrayed around the isle-kingdom. The enemy had never imagined of such preparedness on the part of the small state. If the number of soldiers of Parikud was so big, its generals must have also devised some ways to face the enemy midway on the lake. Common sense told the enemy that it would be better to retreat quietly than get drowned, lock, stock and barrel.



Once the enemy had retreated, the amazed Raja of Parikud found out what had happened. Tens of thousands of flamingos, which had gathered there, had been mistaken by the would-be invaders to be a human army. The hallucination had obviously been created by the deity. Hence the victory or Jai was not the Raja's but the deity's. The Raja greeted the deity, shouting Kali Jai! Thus did the deity receive a new name.

However, the other legend is much more popular. Kalijai was a girl, the name probably owing its origin to a dark mark on her face. She belonged to a small village near Chilika. She had only two interests: to pray to God for the welfare of everybody and to serve the old and the sick. She was loved by all, but that was not enough to allow any change in the way of life traditionally chalked out for an illiterate village girl. As she reached her teens, her guardians looked for a suitable bridegroom for her.





And he was found in another village on one of the isles. Arrangements were made for the girl to be taken to the bridegroom's village where the wedding was to be performed.

Kalijai protested and wept. "I'm not meant for that kind of life," she claimed through her tears. But who cared for the babbling of a poor girl! Some took her for mad.

On the appointed day, she was made to board a boat along with her father, uncles and a few other relatives. She sat calm and motionless. Once in a while she would look at the clear blue sky and at the vast and serene lake reflecting the sky. Her guardians were happy under the impression that she had reconciled to the situation. But as the destination came nearer, she showed signs of restlessness, looking at the sky again and again.

Suddenly there broke out a terrific wind. From the not-too distant ocean high waves broke into the lake. Lo and behold, the sky which was without a scratch only a minute ago was overcast with fearful gloomy clouds. And before long it started raining cats and dogs, keeping company with the howling wind. Strings of blinding lightning were followed by deafening cracks of thunder.

The boat was tossing on the mad water like a plaything. "Where're you, my child?" shouted the father groping for Kalijai. Alas, the boat upturned before he could get any response.

Surprisingly, the rain stopped and the clouds began to disperse as fast as they had appeared. The wind too seemed to have fallen into a slumber. Since the party was very close to the isle, the water was only chest-high. They looked at one another. All were there—all but Kalijai. “My child, my daughter!” wailed the father. Some villagers had gathered on the banks of the lake. A few of them joined the bridal party in trying to locate the girl. But she was not be found.

Thereafter fishermen and others who had faced the storm while in the lake had a strange experience. Some invisible power pushed their boat towards the bank even against the current and the wind. If it was night, they could catch glimpses of a faint feminine figure helping them.

BEST TIME TO VISIT

The nicest time to visit Chilika is during winter, when the lake reverberates with the cries of its avian population. Boats, to tour the lake, can be hired at Balugan, Barkul and Rambha. One can even persuade the local fisher-folk to take you on one of their native wooden boats.

EXCURSIONS

Nirmala Jhar:

Just 11 km from Rambha and 21 km from Barkul, Nirmala Jhar is a place of religious worship and a great picnic spot.

Narayani:

Situated 10 km away from Barkul, by the side of a perennial stream, is the shrine of goddess Narayani. The temple and its surroundings is an ideal picnic spot.

Banpur:

Banpur is a centre of religious worship revolving round the shrines of Goddess Bhagabati and Dakshya-Prajapati. It is 13 km from Barkul and 8 km from Balugaon.

Somehow they took it to be the spirit of Kalijai. She continued to help others even after her death — death that she seems to have commanded to come to her rescue!

It is possible that the deity was already there before this episode. By and by the spirit of Kalijai the girl was identified with the deity. On the occasion of Makar Sankranti, in the month of Magha according to the Indian calendar (roughly the middle of January), there takes place a grand festival around the shrine of Kalijai. People come with offerings of fowl and goats. But they are not sacrificed. After some rituals, they are let loose in the adjoining forests on the three hills constituting the isle. At any time you may find a number of them roaming around the shrine.

The spirit of Kalijai may go on helping the people



untiringly, but it is a million dollar question if the people themselves are helping to retain the purity and sanctity of the lake. With proper care and planning, Lake Chilika could easily become one of the most beautiful natural attractions anywhere in the world. The spot where the lake meets the sea, called Satpara, is remarkable for the sight it presents during the sunrise. But it is an experience to be there any time of the day, with the vast and rolling sea on one hand and the tranquil lake on the other, the hills and the greenery changing their ambience according to the changing mood of the clouds and light. It is also a favourite haunt of dolphins.

The environment of the lake is rich in historic traditions. Banpur, a nearby village, is believed to have been the capital

HOW TO GET THERE

Chilika is well connected by air, rail and road. Bhubaneswar is the nearest airport, situated 105 km from Barkul, 130 km from Rambha and 110 km from Satpara. Indian Airlines has flights from Delhi, Kolkata, Visakhapatnam, Raipur, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Chennai.

The Kolkata-Chennai rail route of South Eastern Railway touches Chilika Lake at Balugaon, Chilika, Khallikote and Rambha. The nearest railway station for Barkul is at Balugaon (5 km) and for Satpara, at Puri (50 km).

The Chennai bound National Highway No.5 linking Kolkata-Cuttack-Bhubaneswar-Balugaon-Barkul-Rambha-Berhampur and Visakhapatnam runs along the lake. The OTDC as well as private tour operators provide luxury coaches and cars from Puri and Bhubaneswar.

of an ancient kingdom, Kangod. Generations of the ruling dynasty had built several temples, some of which are still lively with worship and rituals. For miles and miles along the banks of the lake one can find solitary spots of beauty as if Nature had carved them for no other purpose but for her own repose.

Great poets of Orissa have left behind immortal compositions inspired by the lake. Among them is Radhanath Roy, one of the makers of modern Oriya poetry. His long poem on the grandeur of the lake is an immortal classic. It is a fusion of description and reflection. The magnificent natural traits of the lake inspire in the poet thoughts that are highly absorbing.

The other great poet revered as an architect of modern Orissa, who too wrote a moving poem on Chilika, indeed, while he travelled by train along its hypnotizing edge, is Gopabandhu Das. He makes us conscious of the hidden aspects of this grand architecture of Nature. A third one is Godabarish Mishra, who immortalized the legend of



one is Godabarish Mishra, who immortalized the legend of Kalijai through a highly sensitive poem.

Despite the callousness of we people who visit the great lake, it is vibrant with a different kind of life which one can feel only if one respects the place and tries to be enriched by its subtle influence instead of merely enjoying it. The lake has a very inviting aura. Once, long ago, when a gang of vandals marched towards the temple of Sri Jagannath, the deities were stealthily brought into the lake and kept hidden in the isle of Parikud. If the lake had the privilege to give shelter to the Lord, no wonder it can give a touch of solace to the heart of the weary and the tense. Its tranquil vastness can help us expand our own consciousness.

(The End)



WHERE TO STAY

Accommodation is available at various places in and around the lake. Some of the hotels are maintained and managed by the OTDC, while many are privately owned.



TOURIST ASSISTANCE

Rambha Tourist Office,
Barkul.

Puri Tourist Office, VIP
Chhak.

NATURE INTERPRETATION CENTRE

A must call-on spot for tourists to Chilika is the Visitor Centre at Satapada, the gateway to Chilika lake. The Centre is a mini museum that showcases the entire lake ecosystem of Chilika. Every person visiting Chilika is oriented with the biodiversity of the lake through the various exhibits, galleries, aquarium, audio-visual aids, dioramas, touch-screen information panels. There is even a discovery room for children. The idea is to provide tourists with a nature interpretation arena of the wetland ecosystem of this lagoon along with the threats to the habitat and the need to protect and conserve the ecosystem.

To make it visitor-friendly, the Centre provides computerised touch-screens, panel exhibits of the flora and fauna, photographs of various migratory bird and animal species, digitised sound players to provide a variety of information. The Centre has an interactive children's corner with puzzles, board games and so on to make learning a fun experience.



Touch Orissa to feel India



Flowing through the arteries of Orissa, is the living and continuing culture of India... its varied expressions and its rich variety. The very stones speak of the unique history of the nation. The temple-culture condenses the quintessence of India. Whether it is the sacred environs of Lord Jagannath temple, or the eroticism of Konark's Sun temple, the wondrous caves of Jainism or the mystical monasteries of Buddhism, the paintings of folklore or the weaver's magic... Orissa speaks eloquently of a living past and continuing present. The rhythmic and exotic classical 'Odissi dance' evolved from the cult of the 'devadasis' or female temple dancers reverberates not only within the portals of the nation, but also echoes on foreign shores too. Folk dances like the 'Chhau' or the 'Sambalpuri' dance and tribal dances like the 'Ghumura' & 'Paraja' can set any soul ablaze. Indigenous theatre in the form of 'Pralad-Nataka' or the 'Dhanuyatra' are expressions of the 'Indianness of India'. Fairs like the 'Bali Jatra' remind us of our ancient maritime links with Bali. And to crown it all is our universally-acclaimed 'Rathayatra' of Lord Jagannath which has infected the world. So... sure and true flows the Orissan culture reflecting the Indian Culture.



Visit Orissa - Experience India.

Culture

Orissa
The Soul of India

For more information contact: Director, Tourism; Paryatan Bhavan; Bhubaneswar-751014, Orissa, India
Tel: (0674) 2432177, Fax: (0674) 2430887, e.mail: ortour@sancharnet.in, website: www.orissa-tourism.com
Tourist Offices at: **Chennai:** Tamilnadu Tourism Complex, Ground Floor, Near Kalaivanar Arangam Wallajah Road, Chennai - 600002, Ph: (044) 25360891, **Kolkata:** Utkal Bhawan 55, Lenin Sarani, Pin-700013
Tel: (033) 22443653, **New Delhi:** Utkalika, B/4 Baba Kharak Singh Marg, Pin - 110001, Telefax (011) 23364580



Face to Face with Nature



CHILIKA - the hopping , Singing and flying nursery for children. This lazy and dreamy Chilika lake dwells in the East Coast of Orissa. When in Chilika, you are in nature's classroom, being taught the alphabets of nature. "This is a dolphin" and "That is a heron" - a live picture book for kids. Parents take note: Open the eyes of your children to this special page of ever-gathering beauty. Chilika is the wintering ground for migratory birds. Colours and varied shapes shall tickle the imagination of young minds. In boats one can go exploring little fairylands - the exciting islands. Water sports adds to the existing excitement for kids and men with young hearts. In the middle of this clear, dark blue lake stands the famous 'Kalijai temple'. The story of Kalijai will chase tender hearts like a dream. Capture the talkative beauty and bounty of the gorgeous Chilika in your dead film reels and immortalise the moments of fleeting beauty in the hearts of your young ones.



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Orissa
The Soul of India





**Punit J.
Hiremath
Bangalore**

So, Suhasini took the bird into the open. It was very excited to see the outside world and for a few days, the bird once more started playing with the princess. Suhasini was happy again. Soon the bird got fed up of this and felt sad. Again the maid told the princess that the bird wanted to fly and not to be confined in a cage! But Suhasini was afraid that the bird might fly away and never come back.



So she did not listen to the maid.

One morning, when Suhasini came to the play area, she found the bird dead. From that day, Suhasini stopped smiling. Soon the whole kingdom stopped smiling. The king sent for a medicine man and asked him if the dead bird could be brought back to life. That was not possible, he said, but a similar bird might make Suhasini happy, the king was told.

The king searched far and wide for such a bird but could not get one. So he sent word to King Pratap and soon King Sukh Varma received one more golden bird in a golden cage.

When Princess Suhasini saw the bird, her joy knew no bounds. Her golden bird was alive and fluttering its wings! The king told her that the court magician had given the bird life for the sake of the princess.

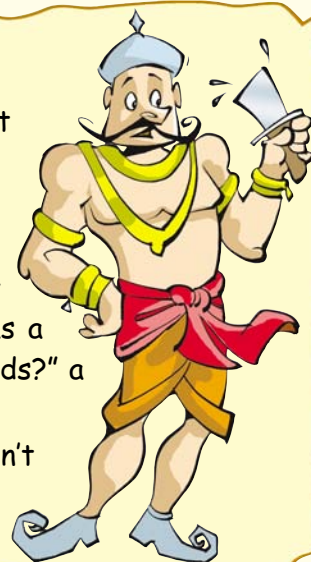
But Princess Suhasini now understood the need for the bird to be free and took the cage with her and went to the nearest forest and released the bird. She hung the golden cage on a tree in the forest and let it remain there forever.

BRAVO!

The kingdom of Magadha was once attacked by the army of Anga. But they were routed. The King of Magadha complimented his soldiers and sent them back with pensions and presents. When they reached their respective places, the people gave them a rousing reception.

Among them was Balaveer. He boasted that he had single-handedly hacked to death a thousand Anga soldiers. The villagers hailed him as a hero. "But you had only cut their limbs; why didn't you sever their heads?" a villager asked him, to the hearing of others.

Balaveer had a ready answer. Without batting an eyelid, he said: "I didn't get a chance to cut their heads! Someone had already severed them!"



How the prince was reformed



*Mahak
Chawla
Bhiwani*

King Vikram of Manavgarh was a very valiant and able ruler. His subjects were very happy with his just rule.

He had a son named Surendra. Being an only son he was brought up over-indulgently and with excessive

One day a farmer called on the king and complained against the prince. "Your majesty, my oxen lay at the door chewing cud. The prince and his friends had bows and arrows in their hands. He goaded them to drive away my cattle. I am now a ruined man. How shall I plough my fields? I seek justice, your majesty."

The king listened to the farmer and felt ashamed of his son's arrogance. He apologised to the farmer and compensated his loss and sent him back happy. He then summoned his son and reprimanded him. "It does not behove of you, my son, to act so insensibly. You're the future king of this kingdom. Each of your action should be in conformity with your royal status. My head



love and care. He enjoyed the full support and protection of his mother, the queen, in all matters - right or wrong. He thus grew to be a pampered and proud prince.

He had a group of friends. They all rode together every day to the nearby forest to hunt wild animals. On their way back in the night, they would harass the people just for the sake of fun. The king was worried on account of their behaviour.

hangs low in shame before my people because of your mean conduct. You are warned to behave yourself with dignity."

Many days passed without any more complaint against the prince. The king thought that his son had improved his character.

But soon the king realised that he was living in a fool's paradise. One day, another farmer reported of a heavy loss caused to his garden by the prince's pranks. "I'm a farmer having



**Sayan
Chanda
Kolkata**

planted a hundred saplings of lime three years back, and now when I was hoping to reap a fortune, the plants had all been crushed under the hooves of young riders who seem to have run amuck over them. They were led by our prince."

King Vikram, surprisingly, instead of bursting into any fit of anger, went into a pensive mood. He kept silent for a while and then called for the prince. He asked his son many questions to probe into his delinquent mind, but the prince stood as if in a stupor without a word, head hung low.

King Vikram then announced: "Since the king's son has ruined the garden of the farmer, the king holds himself responsible for this and is, therefore, sentenced to punishment. He shall have to plant a hundred lime plants and tend them for the next three years in the farmer's garden till he is fully satisfied."

The prince was stunned. As if he woke from a shock, he screamed in distress, "No, father!" and burst into tears.

The court was stupefied. "What will happen, your majesty, to the kingdom? Who will rule the kingdom and conduct the court's proceedings? This is not fair, my lord!" begged the faithful minister.

But the king was determined and did not budge a bit. "In my absence," he said, "the crown prince Surendra will rule the kingdom."

The prince, who had come of age, all of a

sudden felt agony over his father's decision. "Father," he begged of him, "how can an unruly and ignorant child rule a kingdom?"

Let me take the punishment on myself since I'm the one who is guilty. Let me grow the plants and look after them for the next three years. Let me have an opportunity to repent and change myself. And I promise, father, I shall not be the same again."

But the king said, "Our wise and loyal minister will guide and help you to rule the kingdom. My decision will not change."

The king stepped down from the throne and accompanied the farmer to his garden. And he began to nurture two things at the same time — the farmer's garden as well as the career of his son, Prince Surendra.



The stone melted away



Babita
Kumari
Haryana

Summer was at its peak and it was noon time. The sun was spitting flames of fire. The earth was as hot as a burning pan. The sun-bursts were scorching the creatures of the earth. The streets of the village wore a deserted look. All doors remained closed and everyone sat or slept inside their houses.

In the corner of the village was a roof of tiles under which lived an old woman. She, too, had closed her doors and was spinning thread on her spinning wheel while humming a song, "*ghoom ghoomeru charkha mera kate lamba soot*" (whirl on spinning a long thread, O my spinning wheel). A 10-year-old boy sat close to her and was trying to please his grandmother with his titbits while she, too, in turn, entertained him by her charkha-geet, the song of the spinning wheel.

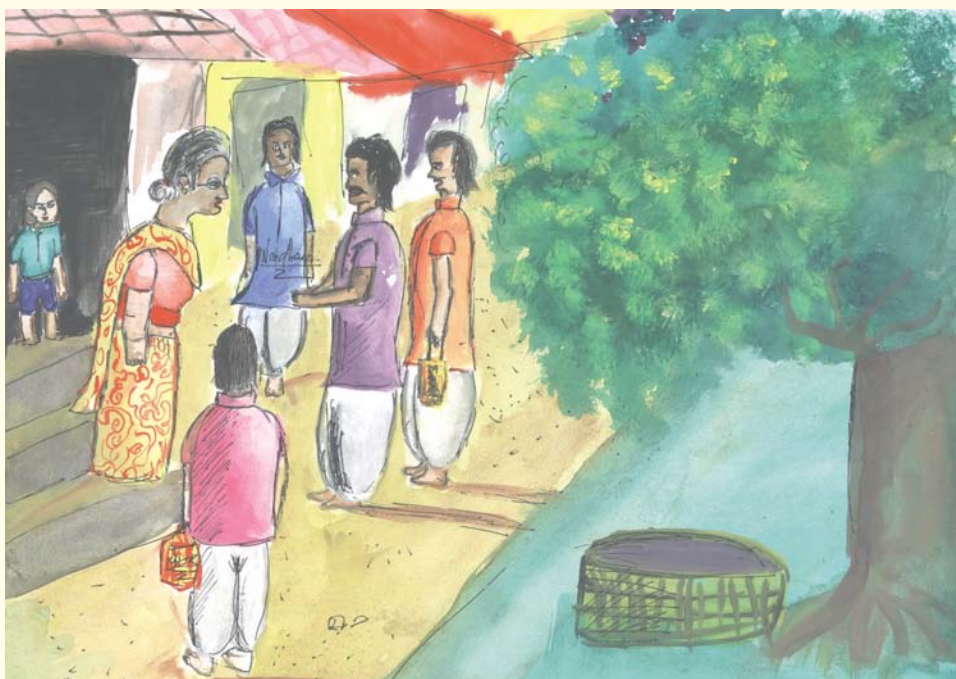
Suddenly, there was a rat-tat-tat; someone had knocked at the door. The boy got up like a spring and ran to open it. As the door opened, the old woman's eyes fell on four stout young men.

"Grandma, it's terribly hot outside. There are no trees here for wayfarers to sit and relax under their shade. We're very thirsty and our lips are parched due to the heat wave. Would you please allow us to take rest for a while in your house? We shall go away as soon as the sun is a little down in the west," one of the young men pleaded with the old woman.

She looked at the handsome young man and was reminded of her own son who resembled his face and figure. She felt as if her own son, Bholu, stood there and the other three were his friends. Bholu had died of a sun-stroke only the previous year. She suddenly felt a strong yearning to pour her heart on the strangers. "Bete, take this house for your home and take rest here as long as you wish." She felt tears in the corner of her eyes as she spoke.

As the young men relaxed in one corner of the house, the old woman got up to prepare *sherbat* for them for 'they must have been thirsty and have had their lips and throats dry,' she thought. 'I will quench their thirst.'

On one hand she was all love for the strangers and her heart was in spate with deep affection for them; on the other hand, the minds of





K.V. Nandhan
Chennai

the youth were cooking up something entirely opposite to it. As the old woman got up to serve them sherbat, the youth who resembled her son to her eyes fished out his pistol from his pocket and, aiming it at her, stood at the door and threatened in his forbidding voice, "If you try to yell, you'll be shot!"

The boy was panic-struck, but the old woman had no trace of fear on her face.

The three accomplices meanwhile ransacked the house and bundled up whatever valuables they could lay their hands on — cash and jewellery. The old woman watched them calmly for a while and then, addressing the young man with the pistol, said, "Bete, I have already told you that this is your home and whatever is here belongs to you. You can take them all. But now who will drink this sherbat that I have made for you with so much love and longing?"

These affectionate words of the old woman shot like a bullet straight into the hearts of the young men. Their conscience was touched. The stone melted away. Their eyes

were wet and tears rolled down their cheeks. The pistol dropped from the youth's hand and the image of his own old mother flashed before his eyes.

Next moment, the four heads were touching the feet of the old woman. She stood a calm and graceful figure of love and compassion, with a sweet smile on her face. Love at last had got the better of violence.



Chandamama wishes to congratulate all the young participants - writers and illustrators - for their contribution to the Children's Day special pages.

We have had a very good response in all the languages. We hope that in the next year, too, you all will participate in greater numbers and thereby encourage us to increase the number of pages to accommodate all your efforts.

We would also like to thank the parents for their continued support to *Chandamama*.

- Publisher

The Lesson



B.
Swaminathan
Chennai

"Hey, get up, get up... It's time for school... get up, I say." Nothing could have been more bitter to Mani than his mother's exhortation. He never liked going

Mani hated learning. Not a day passed without Kuppusami lamenting Mani's attitude.

Mani's hatred for school grew day by day. Teachers' beatings and fellow students' jeering helped only to make things worse. His hatred reached its peak when one day he said with finality, "Daddy, I won't go to school from tomorrow. I shall go to work with you."

Kuppusami became silent for a while. Then he said: "All right. Come with me tomorrow." Mani was surprised at the ease with which this was said. He expected a fierce thrashing or at least a bitter scolding.

Mani walked at an unalloyed leisure, dragging his father's donkey. Freedom at last.



to school. Things would be worse if he had the Maths teacher Nallasivam's period that day.

'Why should they keep goading me to read? The moment I want to go and play, mummy starts calling me names. That is somewhat better than daddy's wailing. He wants me to learn and learn and become an officer. I am fed up with all this.' These were Mani's string of thoughts.

His father Kuppusami was a washerman. He knew the value of education. The sole aim of his life was to make his son an officer. It was towards that goal he toiled day and night. But

Freedom from the drudgery of school.

Working was not going to be half as demanding. After all, one had only to rinse the clothes in water, dry them, fold them and haul them on to the donkey's back. Things would be over in a jiffy.

Reality, alas, was quite different. To remove the dirt from the clothes, one had to break his back. Drying the clothes was a feat by itself. Add to this the whims of the donkey. Mani learnt the seamy side of life the hard way. To think that his father had been putting up with all this for years together. Mani realised that school



*Neha
Adiga
Bangalore*

routine was easier and simpler.

"Daddy, I will go back to school. I shall study well and become an officer as you want," said Mani to his father. Kuppusami greeted this news with tears in his eyes. He hugged his son and said, "You can do it. After all, you're my son."

"But daddy, when I refused to go to school, you could have thrashed me and sent me to school. Why didn't you do so?" queried Mani.

"I could have done that. But then your hatred for school would have only grown. Learning would have become all the more tough. But now you have taken this decision on your own, out of the lesson you learnt from your

experience. This resolve of yours will be lasting. I've little doubt you would end up as an officer," said Kuppusami.

Mani's resolve was plainly evident.



THE SENTIMENTAL OWL AND THE WISE CROW

The owl and the crow met near a temple. "Where are you going?" the crow asked the owl. "You know, I was living in the hollow of a tree in the village Rampur. But I feel the people there hated my screeching. So, I am heading towards another village," replied the owl. The crow laughed.

"Why are you laughing?" the owl asked.

"My dear owl, if the people of Rampur hated your screeching, do you hope that the people of another village will love it? The best thing is to change your screeching into some melodious music. Since you cannot do that, just as I cannot change my cawing into music, the best thing is to be where we are. At least the people of Rampur will get accustomed to it!" said the crow.



The Clever Son

Sajari
Rahman
Hanamkonda

Once upon a time, there lived a merchant in a town. He was very honest and clever. He amassed a lot of wealth through trade and commerce. He made a good name and fame for himself. He had three sons. They were also looking after his business.

One day he fell ill. He began to worry about the future of his business. He did not want to leave his business to all his three sons. He feared there might be a quarrel amongst them, and the business would be affected. He wanted to hand over the business to only one, the cleverst amongst his three sons.

He thought of a way to choose the cleverest. One day he called his sons and said, "I am giving each one of you a rupee. Go and get with that rupee whatever you like which will fill a room in our house by evening". The three sons agreed and went out.

The first son bought a huge cart load of straw and filled the room with loose straw.

The second son bought a huge bale of waste cotton. He opened the bale and filled another room with loose cotton.

The youngest son bought one earthen lamp, one wick for the lamp, and sufficient oil to be poured in the lamp. All he spent was three paise. The balance amount he kept safely.

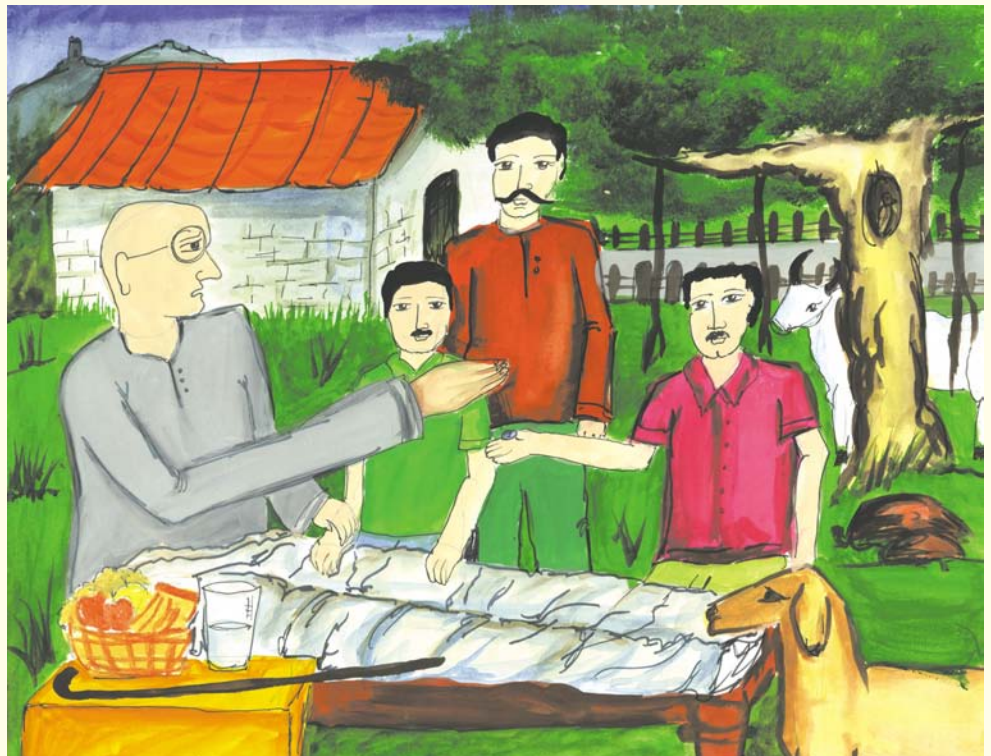
He came to his room,

poured the oil in the earthen lamp, and lit the lamp with fire from the kitchen. The flame from the wick lit the entire room brightly.

At the end of the day, the merchant entered the room of his eldest son and began coughing due to the dust that came from the straw. He then opened the room of the second son, and the loose cotton flew into his eyes and mouth choking his throat and eyes. Finally, he came to his youngest son's room. There the merchant saw the bright and pleasant light which had filled the entire room. His son greeted him joyfully, and gave him back the balance amount from the rupee. The merchant now had no difficulty in deciding that the youngest son was the cleverest of the three. He made him in charge of the whole business then and there.



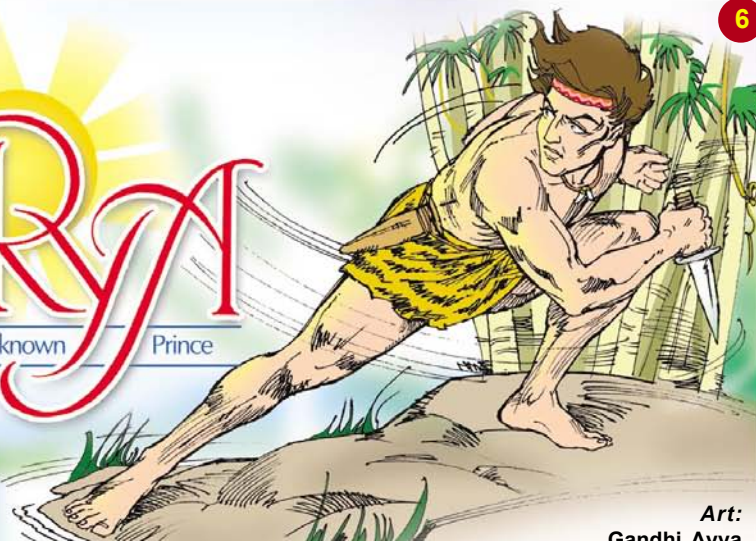
Punit J.
Hiremath
Bangalore



Jayananda and disciple Ramu find an infant, and a woman lying unconscious. She looks at the child and passes away. Her spirit appears before the hermit. She was the queen of Shantipur. Disciple Govind tells them that the kingdom is in turmoil; the king is missing.

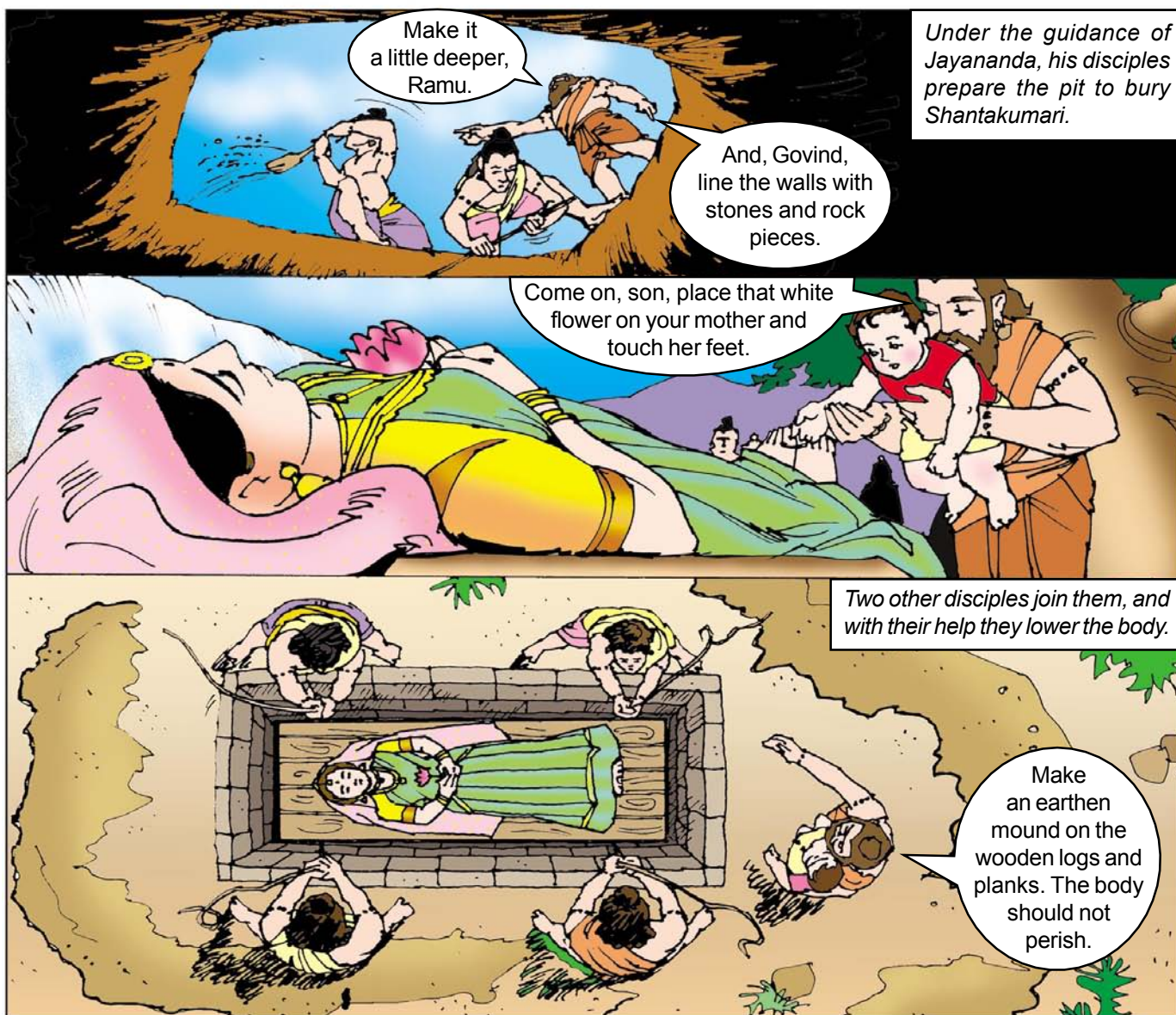
ARYA

The Mystery of the Unknown Prince



Art:
Gandhi Ayya

6



Make it a little deeper, Ramu.

Under the guidance of Jayananda, his disciples prepare the pit to bury Shantakumari.

And, Govind, line the walls with stones and rock pieces.

Come on, son, place that white flower on your mother and touch her feet.

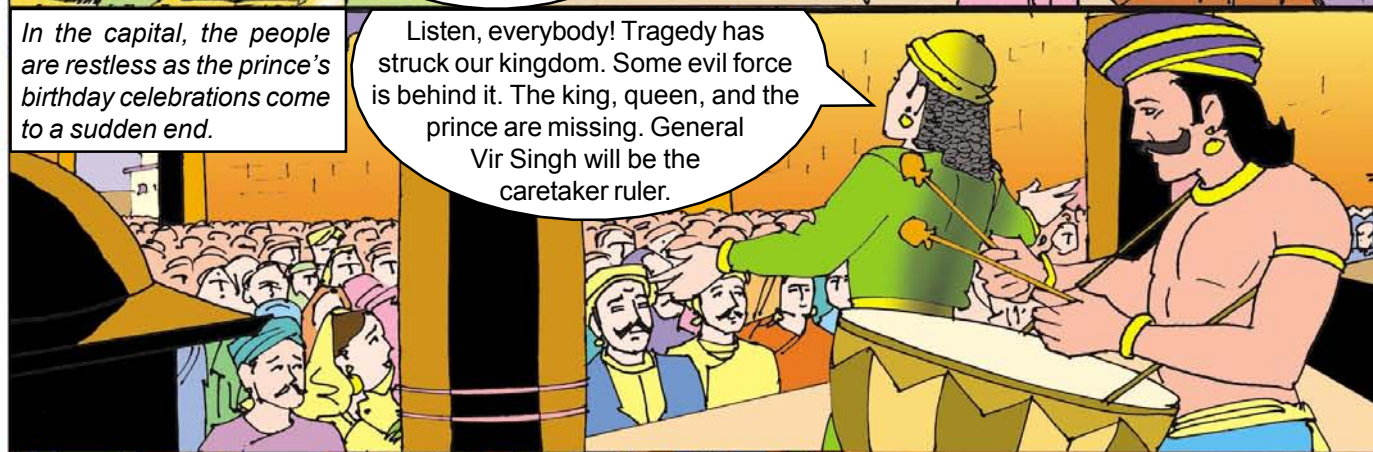
Two other disciples join them, and with their help they lower the body.

Make an earthen mound on the wooden logs and planks. The body should not perish.



In the capital, the people are restless as the prince's birthday celebrations come to a sudden end.

Listen, everybody! Tragedy has struck our kingdom. Some evil force is behind it. The king, queen, and the prince are missing. General Vir Singh will be the caretaker ruler.



Where is the king? We've a right to know!

It's none of your business! All of you return to your homes.



A joyous night followed by tragic news.

No discussions! Hear me?

Will we enjoy peace any more in future?

I told you not to speak!



Guards! Take him away!





If anybody else wants to follow him, you may.

Vir Singh is left with a near empty court.

As is his usual practice, Manavendra goes to the Siva temple for worship.

On his way back, unaware of him, he is waylaid by three persons.

He sees a sword striking at them at lightning speed. The three persons lie dead.



You!

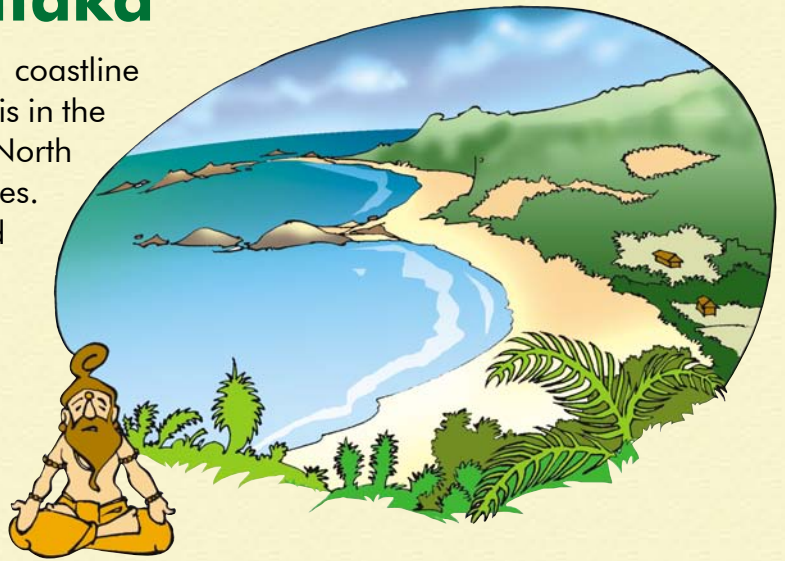
Don't speak! Go away to Amritpur, and fast!

To continue



Beaches of Karnataka

The southern State of Karnataka has a coastline 200 miles long. Almost half of this length is in the district called Uttar Karnataka (formerly North Kanara), which has as many as 24 beaches. All of them are unspoilt and maintained spick-and-span. The shimmering sands attract the local people as well as tourists. One of the beaches draws the largest number of people, because it has a resemblance to the auspicious *Om* sign. Small wonder, the beach is popularly known as the *Om* Beach. Another beach is called Rabindranath Tagore Beach.



Origin of Saraswati

Among the major rivers of India, the Saraswati, too, is counted although there are no traces of it anywhere; however, its confluence (*sangam*) with the Ganga and Yamuna at a place called near Allahabad had always been taken for granted. The Archaeological Survey of India, under a Rs. 8 crore project, has been conducting extensive excavation in Haryana to find the origin of the river that had vanished. A site in Adi Badri has thrown up pottery, carved slabs, several artefacts, a verandah, a meditation hall and an image of the Buddha, indicating people having lived on the banks of a river. The archaeologists believe, the river could have been only what is generally considered as the mythical Saraswati. They have put the date of the habitation as AD 300. Adi Badri, according to them, is one of several sites that existed on the banks of Saraswati.





Palaeontology



This is a word derived to mean the science that deals with the study of fossils. In Greek, '*palaios*' means ancient, '*ontos*' means being, and '*logos*' means 'discourse'.

Fossils are the remnants of any life form (plant and animals) that once lived on earth millions of years ago. These fossils are used to reconstruct the history of earth and the life on it. It is an evidence of evolution and displays the changes a certain species on earth has undergone through over the years. These fossils could be wood, bones, or shells. Sometimes, the tracks or footprints of animals that have been preserved for centuries are also treated as fossils. These footprints have been discovered on rocks now solidified. What is rock today would have been soft sand or clay during that period. These rocks also help the palaeontologist to determine the era of the animal.

Generally, palaeontology is associated with animal fossil, but there are other sub disciplines too, like:

Palaeobiochemistry: the study of fossils and their organic remains.

Palaeobotany: the study of fossil plants and vegetation including algae and fungi.

Palaeoecology: the study of the ecology and the climate of the past.

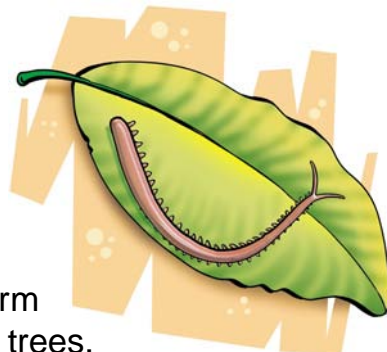
Palaeogeography: the study of the geography of the past and the fossils in that particular geographical area.

Peripatus

When is a worm not a worm? When the animal is a peripatus. Peripatus is a shy little animal that looks like a caterpillar. They have short, stubby legs and a long, soft, wrinkled body. They are often called 'velvet worms' or 'walking worms'. But they are not worms!

Peripatuses are nocturnal creatures usually found in warm countries, like Africa and South America, under stones, logs, or trees. They are about 12 cm long and blue, brown, or grey in colour. They have 14 or more unjointed legs. Some may have 40 pairs of legs.

The peripatus generally feeds on decaying insects, especially termites, worms and snails. They catch their prey in an interesting way. It has two large salivary glands on its head. From this gland it spits out a sticky secretion. As this secretion dries, it entangles the prey, which becomes immobile. The peripatus then makes a hole on the body of the prey through which it sucks out the soft parts of the prey.





Peat

Peat is a mixture of decomposed or humus material that is accumulated in any water-saturated environment in the absence of oxygen. If you ever visit a swampy area you can find a thick mass of half-decayed brown, spongy decayed material at the bottom in these swampy areas. During the early stages of

earth's development, the land was swampy and marshy and old world plants such as mosses and ferns grew in large numbers. When these plants died, they sank to the bottom and new plants grew on top of them. These too died and decayed over the years to form layers and layers of humus.

The wet swampy area where peat is found is known as a peat bog. These peat bogs are actually wetlands that have practically no drainage. Rain is the main source of water for these bogs.

Due to the decomposed material, the water content in a peat bog becomes acidic. This preserves the layers of decayed plants. Botanists are even able to identify the plants that grew in these bogs centuries ago. The commonest types of plants species found here were the sphagnum mosses.

When the peat is gradually piled with clay and sand, it became coal over a period of many centuries. Peat has many uses. It is used as a fuel. As it holds water well, it is used for surgical dressings. It is also used in gardening.



If I bury these plants, do you think I can create coal?

No, but it will create a stink when Mom finds out what happened to her plants.

Activity

Given below is a list of scientists and their achievements. Match the scientists with their work.

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Pasteur, Louis | a. Discovered North Pole |
| 2. Pauling, Linus | b. First calculator |
| 3. Peary, Robert Edwin | c. Molecular structure of protein |
| 4. Pascal, Blaise | d. Pasteurisation |



Answers:
1 - d,
2 - c,
3 - a,
4 - b.

- Compiled By Vidhya Raj

Story of Ganesa

23. How the Lord went to the help of a woman

A couple who did not have children worshipped Vighneswara for many years and then the woman gave birth to a baby girl. Even when she was a baby, she would be seen looking at the image of Vighneswara in the house for long hours. The expression on her face was such that it was as though the Lord was beckoning her.

Her parents called her Sundari, meaning beautiful; in fact she grew up to be a beauty. She also proved to be well behaved and intelligent. She went out of her way in extending help to others.

No wonder, there were many suitors for her hand. And they included young men from wealthy families and sons of rich persons. In fact, her father wondered whether a reigning king himself would not seek her hand in marriage.

When Sundari came to know that her parents were seriously contemplating her marriage, she went and prayed to Vighneswara: "Please save me from this dilemma. Right from childhood, I have only been thinking of you. I won't be able to lead a family life. I implore, please make me an old woman! Only then will I be able to carry on a life of service to humanity."

Lo and behold, Sundari was suddenly transformed to an old woman, with wrinkled cheeks and a burrowed forehead. Her parents were reduced to tears. "What's all this, Sundari?"

"Father! My dear mother! I'm no more a young lady, nor am I beautiful. You've brought me into this earth, and Lord Vighneswara has blessed me to be of service to humanity. I shall share my knowledge with people who are unlettered. I will also seek knowledge from intellectuals. I am starting on a pilgrimage. Please bless me with all success in my mission!"

Having heard of the people's praise of the old woman, the ruler of the kingdom came to meet her. "O king!" she addressed him. "You are duty bound to protect the people and their wealth and property. It is also your duty to provide protection to young women. Did you expect to meet such a woman when you came here?"

The king was taken aback as he listened to the old woman. He took off his crown and unsheathed his sword, and fell at her feet. "O Devi! By merely looking at your face I have gained the knowledge of Truth. Your words have erased my ignorance. From today, I shall serve my subjects without any official insignia of royalty!"

The king was all praise for the old woman and he extended facilities for her pilgrimage, and even offered to accompany her. She rejected all such offers and said, "O king! How can I travel in a palanquin among people who can't afford to wear anything on their feet? You must provide such facilities to them. And whatever small help I can extend, I wish to do



everything for them. All other assistance will come from Vighneswara and his younger brother, Subrahmanya. They will protect me!”

After saying that, the woman started on her pilgrimage. On her way she came upon four women at a well. They were discussing who would draw water first, and who next.

A girl, standing at a distance, was seen pleading, “Mother, I’m thirsty, please give me some water!” The women looked askance at her and one of them said harshly, “Go and stand at a distance! See that your shadow doesn’t fall on us!”

The old woman could not stand that sight. She went and drew water from the well and gave some water to the girl and drank the remaining water herself from the same vessel. “What have you done?” the women were horrified. “You drank whatever was left by the girl. She is from a low caste!”

The old woman then reminded the ladies that it was the same blood that flowed through the girl and herself. She looked into the pots they had brought to collect water and said, “I have a feeling that it is milk that flows through your bodies. Why would you then need water? So, you give us water, and yourselves drink milk!”

The ladies hung their heads in shame and sought forgiveness from the old woman who then proceeded on her way. At one place she was accosted by a boy sitting on a tree full of fruits. He looked handsome and the woman wished to talk to him. “Will you give me a fruit?” she asked him.

“What fruit would you like to have, mother?” the boy responded thus. “Shall I give you a fruit that would make you young? Or would you like a fruit which would ward off death for you? Or could it be a fruit which would



give you riches?” he said, all the while smiling.

The old woman now realised that the boy was none else than Subrahmanya. “O Lord! Please give me the fruit of Knowledge, so that I can share it with others!”

At that moment, Subrahmanya appeared before her. He was seated on his mount, the peacock. He touched her head with his sword, and in no time she was blessed with whatever knowledge there was to be imbibed. She continued her journey, sometimes singing in praise

of the brothers Subrahmanya and Ganesa, and other times giving discourses to make people lead a life of righteousness.

Suddenly the sky was overcast with dark clouds and there was thunder and lightning. The old woman stumbled over a stone and fell down. “Come on, get up, hold on to my hand.” She heard someone say that and taking hold of her hand. In the flash of a lightning she saw that it was none other than Lord Vighneswara, who was holding her hand by his tusk.

“Mother! We’ve reached the abode of Siva!” said the Lord. The woman saw a brilliant glow all around. When she looked beneath her, she could see the sun, the moon, and the stars and planets. The world was rotating at a high speed. Vighneswara once again reminded her, “Mother, you’ve reached the presence of Lord Siva! This is Kailas where nobody experiences death, where all creation takes place. You may pay your respects to the Lord of the entire universe, Viswanatha!”

The old woman saw there a brilliant flame. In the centre of the flame she saw Lord Siva, his consort Parvati, and their sons Vighneswara and Subrahmanya. The Lord blessed her.

(To conclude)



Vasudha

Dear eco friends,

Did you know that there is a new kind of bug that is biting people all over the place? Well, this bug is not a real bug. It is called the "litter-bug". It is actually a bad habit. But once you've been bitten by it, you go round littering every place you visit. Making the world look like a huge garbage dump. So, don't let the litterbug bite you. When you feel he is trying to crawl into your mind, just shut him out!

Love

KOPRA KUTTY

Five reasons for not littering

It makes a beautiful place look ugly.

The litter attracts creatures like rats and flies which can cause diseases.

The stink and stench produced by litter that has been lying around for a long time cause pollution.

What we often discard as litter can be put to further use by recycling.

Littering can harm people and animals.



How can you make the world litter free



Let us take a vow today that we will try to keep the environment clean by using the litterbins to throw litter.

We will make sure that the bin is properly covered to prevent it from becoming the breeding ground of insects.

We will educate our friends and neighbours about the evils of littering.

Recycle whenever possible.



Tetrapack flying bird



Here is what you need:

- An empty tetrapack (washed and dried thoroughly)
- A drinking straw
- An ice-cream stick
- A piece of wool about half a metre long
- A pair of scissors
- Fevicol



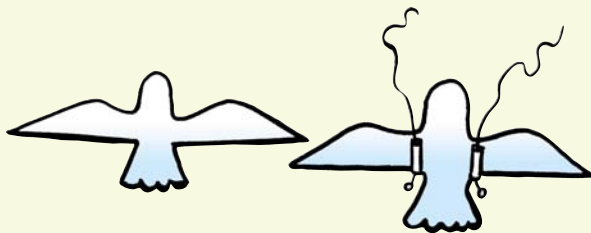
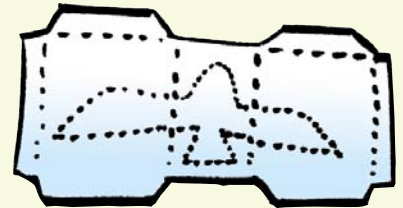
This is what you do:

Take the ice-cream stick and mark the centre point. From this point mark two other points (which are equidistant from the centre).

Now take the wool and cut it into three equal strips.

Take one strip and tie it like a loop (as shown in the picture) on the centre point.

Tie the other two strips on the points (you have marked) on either side (use the picture as your guide), and leave aside.



Cut the tetrapack along the sides, and keep on the work surface, with the silver side on top.

Now draw the bird (on the silver side) as shown in the picture.

Cut the drinking straw into two equal halves. Stick them along the dotted lines (it is there in the picture).

Put the woollen strips that are dangling through the straws and knot up the ends, so that they do not slip out.

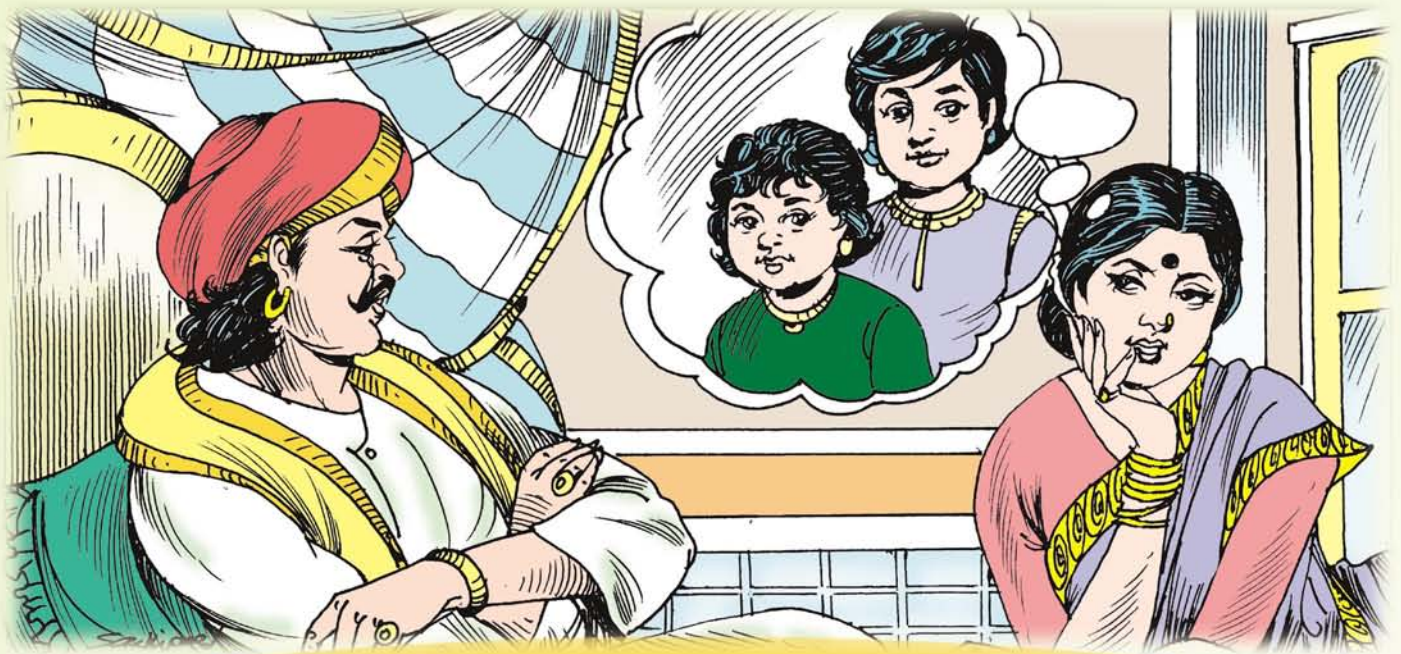
Now pull the knots and watch your bird fly.



A litter free world would mean

- Cleaner environment.
- Healthier people.
- Less wastage of material resources.





The Virtues of Charity

Ramchand of Rajpur was a wealthy man. He was of charitable disposition. He could not bear the sight of people suffering from poverty or illness. He was munificent whenever he thought of mitigating their suffering. He never thought of himself or his family, so much so his wealth slowly got depleted.

His wife Chandrika did not lag behind in charity. Their friends and neighbours often suggested that she should advise her husband not to throw away his wealth indiscriminately. They said it was up to her to check the drain on their wealth. They warned that a time might come when their son and daughter would be left with nothing and the family would face many problems.

Chandrika listened to their advice intently, but would only smile as she thought of a reply. “You know that clouds bring down rain not only on human habitations but on forests as well. Nature does not discriminate. If the clouds were to think that rains are unnecessary for mountains and forests, how then will rivers get their water which humans need most? If my husband is generous-hearted, it has to be taken as a boon from the Almighty. If his generosity will ultimately result in poverty for us, we’ll only take it as our fate ordained by the Lord. Who can prevent it?”

Years went by. Ramchand’s children were now eight and six years old. Ramchand was well-versed in Sanskrit, and people praised his knowledge of the language. One day, Chandrika mustered courage to speak to her husband: “Whoever asks for help, you’re loosening your purse strings unhesitatingly. I’ve never heard you say ‘no’ to anyone. No, I’m not finding fault with your attitude, but I must remind you that our children are growing, and it will be our duty to give them a proper education. I feel they should be admitted to a good school in the town. Everybody knows that you’re an expert in Sanskrit. I feel you should take up a job with the school in the capital. Though our wealth may get depleted, we can at least share our gift of knowledge. It does not matter if we are unable to provide for our children’s future, but we must at least see that they are adequately educated to earn a living. I don’t know how you feel about all this.” She sounded really concerned about the children.

Ramchand thought that what his wife suggested was a good idea. He decided to go to the capital to find more about the school there. On the way he reached a village, Shivapur, where a festival was on in the Shiva temple. Ramchand decided to stay back and attend the festival. The people who had collected there immediately

recognised him as a philanthropist and extended all courtesies. The temple was owned by a zamindar, who was happy to know that Ramchand hailed from a village within his jurisdiction. He also came to know that Ramchand was well-versed in Sanskrit and he was on his way to the capital to secure a job in the school run by him.

“Don’t be in a hurry to go to the town,” he told Ramchand. “You can join the school at your convenience.” Ramchand now felt at ease. So, he arranged for special pujas and rituals in the temple. He paid handsomely to the priests.

Instead of proceeding to the capital, Ramchand returned to his village and told his wife all that had happened in Shivapur. Ramchand was in a dilemma. Heart of hearts, he did not want to leave the village and go to the town. At the same time, he did not wish to reject his wife’s advice. He walked up to the river bank where he sat lost in thoughts.

Near where he sat was a Durga temple. A young man, presumably from another village, was offering his prayers at that time. Ramchand happened to overhear what he was pleading with the goddess: “O divine mother! I studied well, but what is the use? I’m not able to get a job anywhere. I was about to get a job in the school in the town, but I’m told one Ramchand is being considered for the post. O Devi! Please send Ramchand somewhere else so that I can get the job in the school in the town!”

Ramchand was upset as he thought he was responsible for someone else’s sorrow. Realising that the young man had not recognised him, he decided to find more about the youth. He was Ramdas and had studied Sanskrit. He had applied for a job in the school run by the zamindar, and he had been given an assurance that he would be considered. Later on he was called by the principal and informed that the zamindar

wanted to appoint Ramchand and that if he did not join duty within six months, then the job would be given to Ramdas.

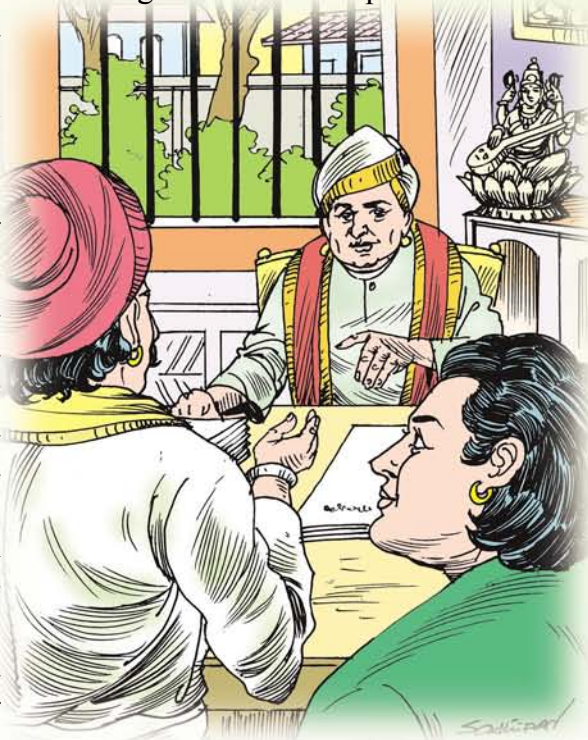
Ramchand decided to help Ramdas. He took him to the principal and told him that as he would take six months to join duty, the post could be given to Ramdas. On returning to his village, he told his wife all that had happened. This time Chandrika was really angry with Ramchand. “One should be charitable within one’s means. How do we know what is going to happen in the next six months? Anything unexpected could happen. How can you forget your duty and depend on god for everything?”

Somehow or other the villagers came to know that Ramchand might go away and take up employment in the town. They could not think of circumstances that would take their benefactor away from their midst. They appealed to him to consider starting a school in the village. After careful thought, Ramchand agreed to their request and started a school and appointed two teachers to assist him.

In the next few days, the zamindar of Shivapur came to know about the school, and he was cross with Ramchand. He sent his assistant to Rajpur to get details about the school. The man went to the village where he enquired with some of the prominent people. He was surprised when he was told that the school had been

named after the zamindar himself, and that Ramchand was meeting all expenses of the school from the income he got from his farm.

The assistant had no adequate words to praise Ramchand when he went back. The assistant even declared that the village should be proud that it had a philanthropist like Ramchand. The zamindar was so pleased that he gifted fifty acres of land to Ramchand for running the school. Not only that, he made arrangements for Ramchand’s children to study in the school in the town.



Children in the News Quiz

Are you regular readers of *Chandamama*? If you are, you will know that we carry a feature called *Children in the News*. This section highlights young achievers in every field. Here is a small quiz on these children.

Jog your memory and see how well you remember them.



Based on an essay from 450 shortlisted entries, this girl was made the Mayor of a metro city for a day. Do you remember her?



Britain conducted the world's largest scientific experiment using 1,000,000 school children. What was the experiment for and was it successful?

My name is Mathew and I live in Rome. Guess what? Something I wrote when I was in Class 4 later became compulsory for all students to read. What did I write about?



I attended a cartoon workshop in Trivandrum in 2001. Based on that I made a movie which made its way into the record books. What is my record?



I am a small girl living in Thrissur, Kerala. But I became famous because of my ability to speak in Hindi to my friend. Incidentally my friend is huge. What is my claim to fame?

(Answers on page 92)

This came from D. Mani Chandrika, of Penugonda:

Our entire family is extremely fond of the magazine. The simplicity of language attracts all the family members. Please print more stories on Indian tradition and culture for us to know about Hinduism. Also please include puzzles to improve the IQ of children. We compliment your team for publishing a wonderful magazine.



Reader P. Jayasri of Srikakulam has this to say:

I am fascinated by English *Chandamama*. The stories by Ruskin Bond enthrall me so much. I would be thankful if you tell us about that wonderful writer for children. The drawings for his stories are very fitting and make the stories very impressive and comprehensive.

Reader Suguna writes from Bangalore:

I have been enjoying your magazine from my childhood days. The heroes of India Quiz is very interesting, but I am disappointed as you are not publishing the answers.

The Quiz comes to an end for the time being. We now have the answers from the promoters and shall publish them, of at least the last few quizzes, if not all.

The story "Through the burning forest" made us feel the fearsome nature of the fire. "Flute player" is a fabulous description of village life. "Getting granny's glasses" shows the mutual affection of grandmother and grandson. I had read some of Ruskin Bond stories as lessons in my school days. Your magazine has helped me to remember my childhood.

Once upon a time a wealthy merchant was passing through a forest. At noon he sat under the shade of a tree to rest.

A little later some woodcutters reached the spot and asked the merchant to move away, for they wanted to cut down the tree.

"How dare you disturb me? Get out of my sight or..."

The woodcutters felt sure that he was a man of authority. So they went away quietly.

Suddenly a voice spoke: "Thank you for scaring those fellows away. Let me reward you with something. Here's a fruit. Hold it in your grip and ask for knowledge. You will grow enlightened Or ask for any three material wishes. Not big ones, mind you!"

A fruit fell in front of the merchant. The merchant picked up the fruit and carried the fruit home.

"I will wish for knowledge," he told his wife.

"Don't you have enough knowledge already? Aren't you a successful merchant? More knowledge will only go waste! Wish for three useful things instead!"

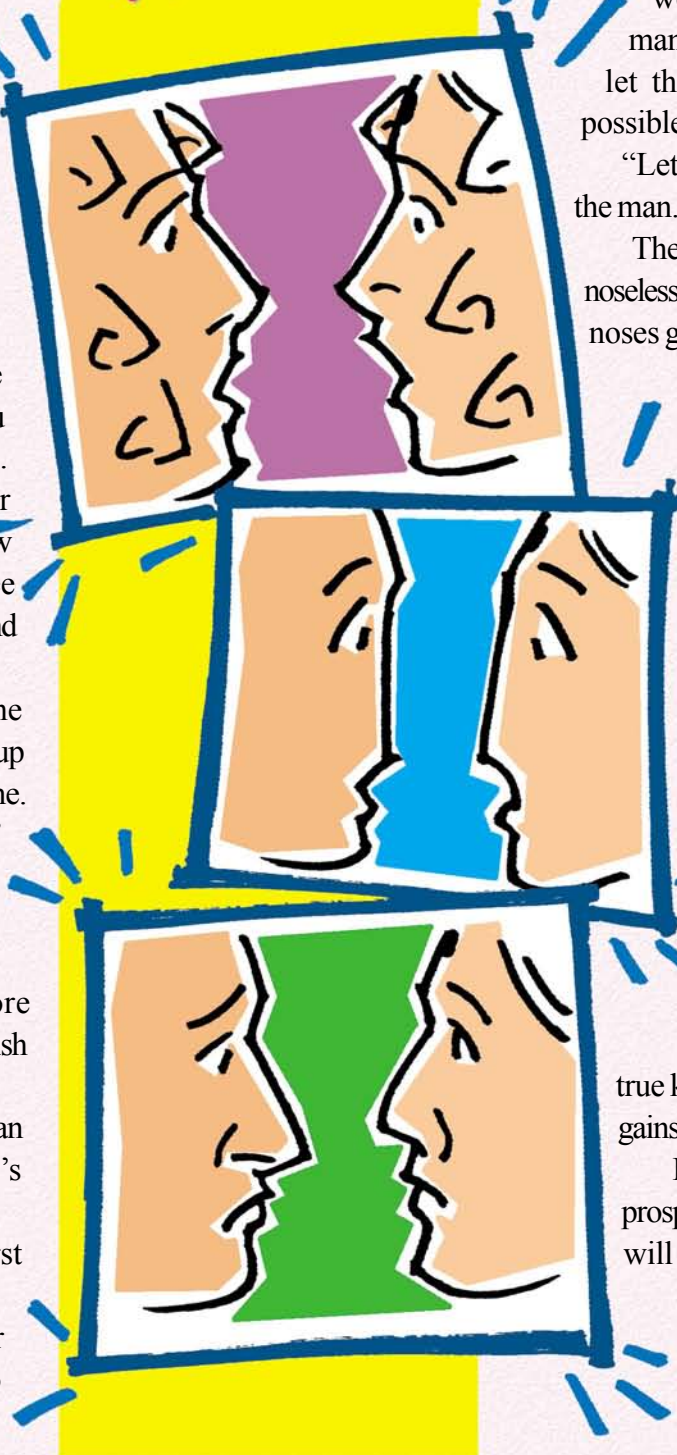
After some argument, the man was convinced about his wife's wisdom.

"What should be our first wish?" he asked.

"Both of us have rather deformed noses. I feel so awkward about it! Let us have

PARABLES FOR EVERYBODY

THREE WISHES



excellent noses!" counselled the lady.

"Very good. Let us have excellent noses!" said the man.

Next moment the man and the woman found their faces sprouting noses everywhere.

"What is this? What are we going to do with so many noses? Please, please, let them vanish as soon as possible!" cried the wife.

"Let our noses vanish!" said the man.

There they stood — entirely noseless — with even their original noses gone.

They found it difficult even to sigh with their noses gone.

"Now, there is only one thing to do. Wish for our original noses to be restored!" said the wife.

The man held the fruit once again and said, "Let us get back our old noses." They had their old noses back, of course.

Such is the condition of man!

Instead of looking for true knowledge, he runs after gains which lead him nowhere.

He is very happy at the prospect of exercising his free-will or freedom of choice.

But what meaning has free-will without the light of knowledge?

- By Vindusar

FUN TIMES



A-maze-ing!



Chikki sparrow is very worried. Her baby, Tippy, is waiting for her in the nest - but try as she might, she can't find her way! Can you help her, by tracing a path for her through the maze to the nest?

Odd man out

One of these five dancing clowns is different from the others. Can you spot him?



1



2



3



4



5

Spot the differences

The two pictures appearing at right look identical - but they aren't! Look carefully, and you can find six differences between them. See if you can find them all.

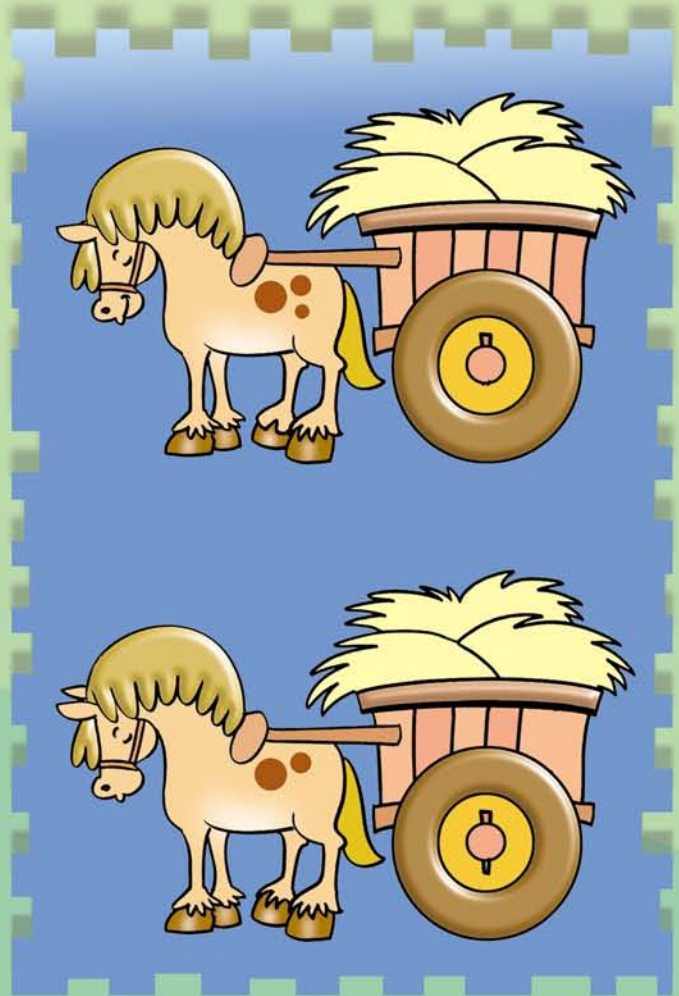
In single stroke

Maresh is shown releasing a dove into the air. Can you reproduce this picture? Simple, did you say? Well, the catch is - you must draw the entire picture - in a single stroke, without lifting the pencil from the page. Try it out!



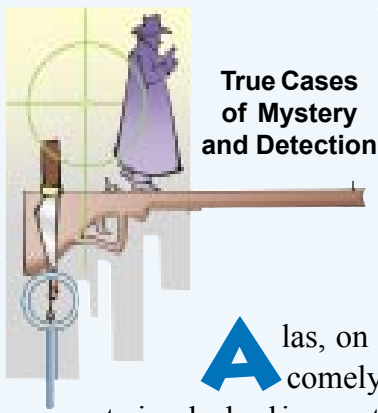
Colouring fun

Swanky swan and her son, Signu cygnet, are out to the Fair, wearing their smartest hats. Paint this picture in your finest colours.



(Answers on page 92)





True Cases
of Mystery
and Detection

TRUTH UNDER THE FINGERNAILS

Alas, on a fine morning in 1912, a comely young woman was found mysteriously dead in a neat little villa on the outskirts of Lyons in France! Only some faint marks, which looked like that of a man's fingers, were seen around her throat and neck. The post-mortem revealed that she was strangled to death sometime before midnight. Her parents, however, confirmed that as far as they knew she had no visitors that evening.

Who then had killed this dainty little lady? What could have been his motive?

The unfortunate victim was Marie Latelle, a vivacious and attractive damsel from a well-to-do middle class family. Not surprisingly, she had a string of ardent admirers and one of them was Emile Gourbin, a bank clerk. Not before long, this ambitious, handsome young man's admiration for her developed into love. She too responded warmly. They were betrothed but before they could get married, there occurred this terrible tragedy.

The police and the detectives were all bewildered and baffled. They were unable to dig out a single clue that could give them a tenable lead in their hunt for the culprit. In fact, the impression about the victim's neck was too blurred to be of any use. All those

immediately connected with the dead girl and her family were interrogated and their testimonies were recorded and examined by experts. But nothing shed any light and the case seemed an enigma.

Finally, the young bank clerk was summoned to the police headquarters. He was thoroughly questioned, grilled

and even coaxed by the officers. He only bemoaned the loss of his Marie amidst gushing tears.

"Yes, I loved her dearly, I loved her madly! I doted upon my lovely Marie! Oh god! She is no more! Now I only look forward to nothing but death. But I will die a happy man once her death is avenged and the culprit duly punished," he said in a seemingly well-rehearsed tone and then broke down once again.

Some of the officers present however had their doubts. They had heard gossips and rumours of Emile Gourbin's jealousy and that he could never stand his fiancée talking to other men. When she did so, being so lively and young, he would fiercely rebuke her. Was he now play-acting before them? Could he then be the culprit? Was the dastardly act committed in a fit of mad fury? But unfortunately they had no proofs to support their suspicion.

Above all, the young man had put forward an unshakable alibi, that when the crime occurred he was actually elsewhere. On that evening he was indeed attending a party at his friend's place some miles away from the house where the crime took place. His friends were sought and they truthfully testified that the bank clerk

had not only dined with them that night, but had in fact stayed back playing cards well past midnight until one o'clock in the morning. Then he bade them goodbye and returned to his room.

Well, if his friends' testimonies were true and the doctor's conclusion that Marie Latelle was killed shortly before midnight was also a fact,



then Emile Gourbin could not have been the culprit. How could he be present at two different places, miles apart, at the same time? Nevertheless, he was put behind bars till the next course of action was decided upon. He only mocked at the police department's folly and exercise in futility! But he could not have laughed for long.

Who was then the killer of lovely Marie Latelle?

The French officers and detectives investigating the case sat in conference. They had only a strong feeling and impression, without any clues and proofs, that the bank clerk was, in all probability, the real culprit. But those feelings and impressions had now been utterly shattered by the alibi. All that they saw before them now was a blank white wall. They had at this juncture only one last straw to cling to, one last hope. They turned for help to a most unassuming man, with a crop of black hair on his head and a strong determined face sporting a dark bushy moustache amusingly drooping at each corner.

He was none other than Dr. Edmond Locard, famous as a criminological scientist. A pioneer in forensic science, he set up the world's first modern, well equipped police and crime laboratory in Lyons in 1910. He always said that a criminal always takes something away from the scene of the crime while he left something behind, too. In other words, when two objects came into contact with each other, each of these objects would leave or transfer particles to the other. This theory formulated by him came to be known as Locard's exchange principle.

The whole case was narrated to him in every minute detail. He listened to it very thoughtfully in his usual calm composure.

"Sir, if you do not come to our rescue now, then the man who we think has committed this inhuman act has to go free," emphatically put in one of the officers.

"Very well, I would first like to see the victim," replied



the great scientist. First he was shown the body of Marie Latelle. He closely studied it for sometime. Then he brought out and adjusted his microscope. It was one of his many inventions. It had the capacity to magnify objects up to fifty thousand times their original size.

With this innovative instrument, Dr. Edmond Locard closely examined the victim. He finally concluded that the marks on the neck were not blurred fingerprints but scratches which might have been inflicted by the assailant when he attacked

her and she struggled to free herself. He also discovered that at places the skin of the throat had been slightly scraped away.

Now Dr. Edmond Locard requested a meeting with the young bank clerk. The prisoner was soon brought to his presence.

"Good morning Mr. Gourbin," he greeted him politely. "Please sit down. Can you show me your hands?"

The other silently obeyed and the great scientist closely examined the hands stretched before him. Then to the amazement of all the onlookers he acted as a skilled manicurist and deftly began to scrape away the deposits from beneath the finger nails of the young man.

"But what are you doing, Sir?" mildly protested Emile Gourbin.

"You'll soon know, friend. Meanwhile please keep your hand still," replied the great man absorbed in his work.

Dr. Edmond Locard carefully gathered the residue he had scraped from beneath the young man's fingernails and then rushed to his laboratory. He seemed excited because he had obtained a clue which until now had been overlooked. He had logically worked out that the person who had committed this crime had definitely carried away beneath his fingernails the prime evidence needed in the case. Hence he had promptly acted as a manicurist. The

material collected from Emile Gourbin's fingernails was put to various tests. Some microscopic photographs revealed that it contained some minute particles of blood and some tiny flakes of skin.

Then a closer examination and several specialised experiments in the laboratory revealed traces of something most unusual. It was nothing but a particular reddish face powder—the cosmetic Marie Latelle regularly used as make-up. Surprisingly, it had the same composition of the powder specially prepared for her by a druggist in Lyons. This vital evidence finally led to the confession of Emile Gourbin and he was sent to the gallows.

In fact his friends, who had all vouched for his alibi,

had indeed been truthful. While all were engrossed in the on-going party that fateful evening, Emile Gourbin had managed to alter the clock unnoticed. He had thus retired to his room much earlier than his friends had thought. He had then stealthily slipped out, while his friends imagined he was in bed, committed the crime and returned and set the clock right. So craftily were these manoeuvres carried out that they did not rouse the slightest suspicion.

Alas, was it just jealousy and envy that had led this young man to perform the dastardly act? But what would have happened had Emile Gourbin trimmed his fingernails? Perhaps the murder of lovely Marie Latelle would have remained an enigma!

Going too far

An elderly millionaire, Mr. Kishanlal, had advertised for a chauffeur for his new limousine. He was flooded with applications. Eventually, he shortlisted three and asked the applicants to meet him on a particular day. Their names were Hari, Ravi, and Gopi.

All the three youths duly turned up at the appointed time. Mr. Kishanlal was waiting for them in the porch of his huge bungalow. The men were awestruck when they saw the gleaming array of cars parked in the vast garage. They wondered what kind of driving test they would have to undergo.

Much to their surprise, the millionaire led them to his private helicopter and asked them to get in. After he too had entered and taken his seat, the helicopter took off.

Fifteen minutes later, they landed on a mountain. After they all had disembarked, he led them up a path that took them to the mountain-top. Soon, they were standing nervously on a cliff which gave them a panoramic view of the world below.

"Now," said Mr. Kishanlal, "I'd like to know how close to this precipice each of you can drive." He looked at Hari. Not wanting to seem cowardly, Hari boasted, "Oh, I can easily drive up to within a few inches of the cliff!"

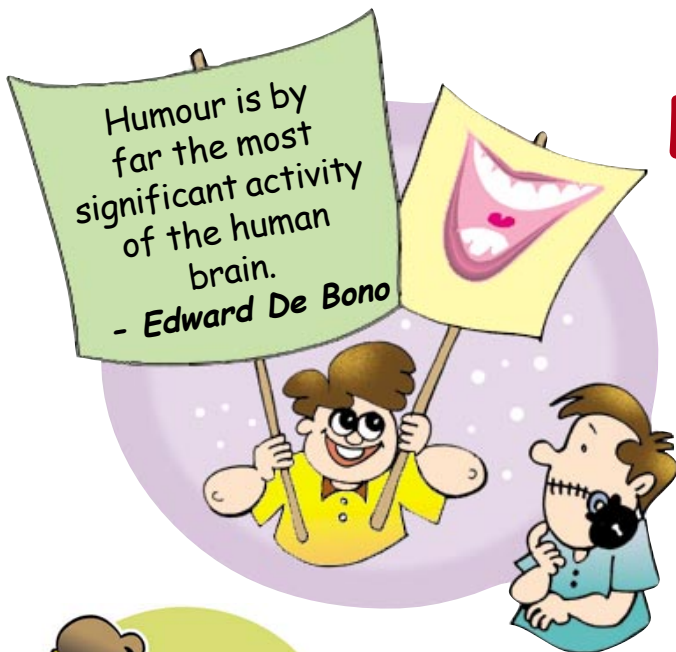
"How about you?" Mr. Kishanlal asked Ravi.

"Well..." stammered Ravi, "maybe up to four or five feet of the cliff!"

Mr. Kishanlal now turned to Gopi, who gulped nervously and said, "I'm sorry, sir, but I wouldn't drive within a mile of the place!"

"Good," said Mr. Kishanlal. "You're hired! I'm looking for a personal chauffeur, not a test-driver!"





Laugh till you drop!

Leaving the bathroom, little Sunil calls out:
"Mom, do you know how much toothpaste is there in one tube?"

Mother: No. How much?

Sunil: Almost three metres! From window to the door.



~~~~~



**Teacher:** Deepak, I wish you'd pay a little attention.

**Deepak:** But I am paying as little attention as possible.



**Shiela:** What would you call 1,000 strawberries, lined up one behind the other?

**Ruma:** A strawberry jam!

~~~~~

Anita: What do computers like for their tea?

Sunita: Silicon chips.



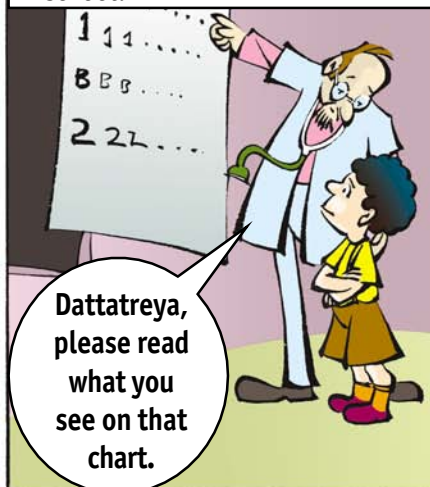
Rahul: What do cars do at the disco?

Vinay: Brake dance.



Dushtu Dattu

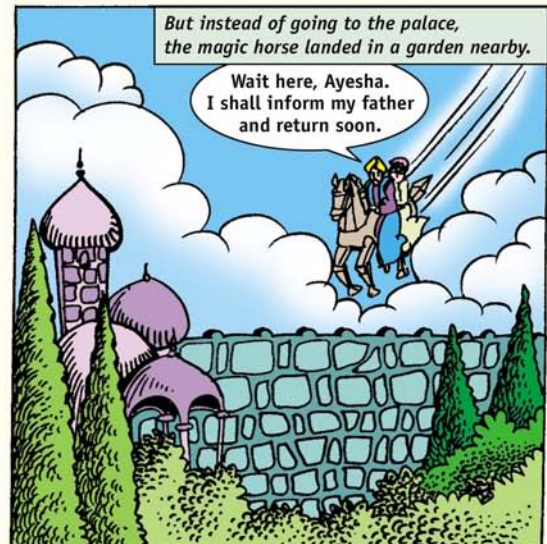
Dattu was getting an eye check-up in school.



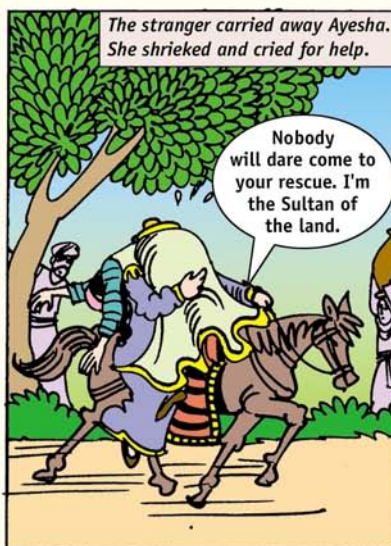
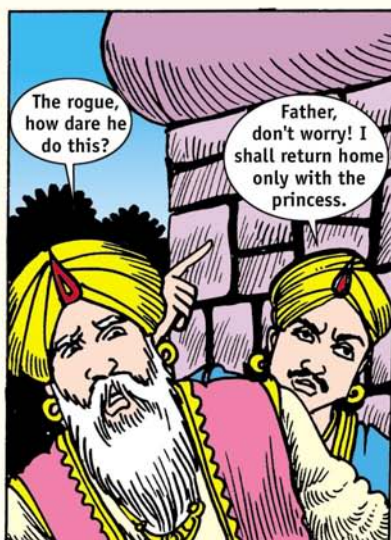
After a few seconds –



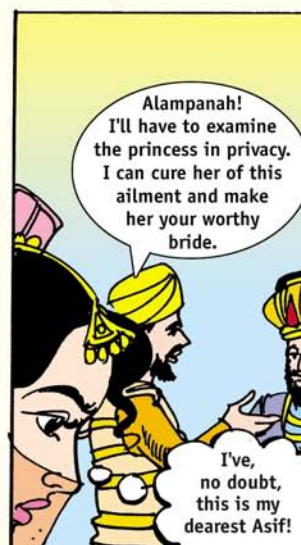
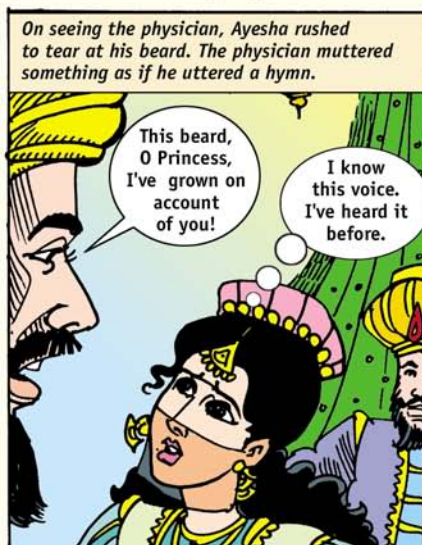
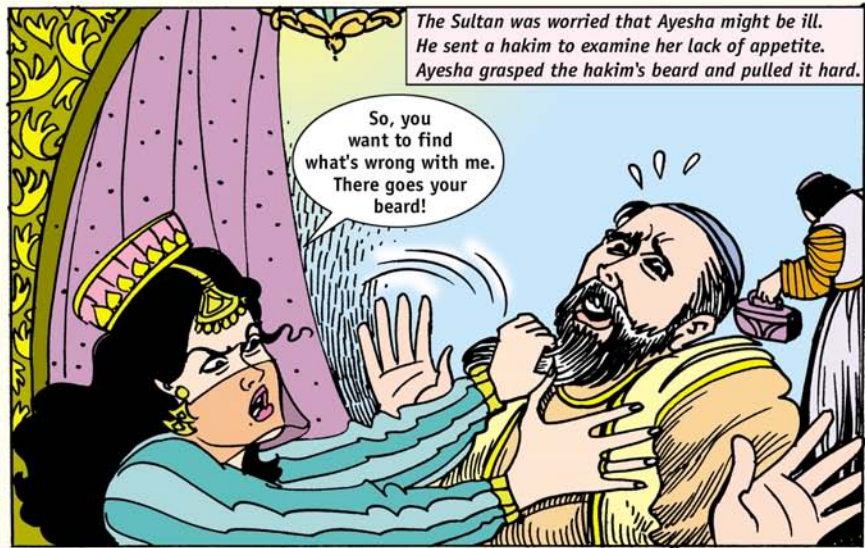
The Arabian Nights : The Flying Horse



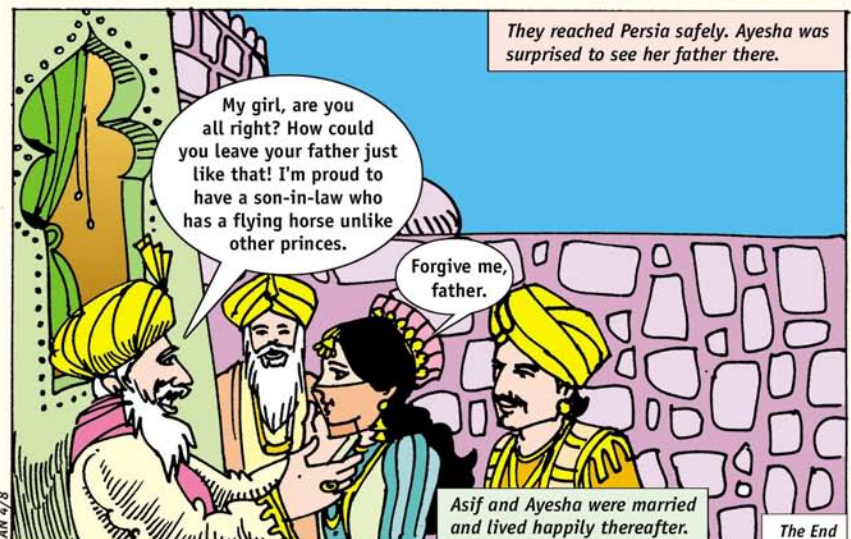
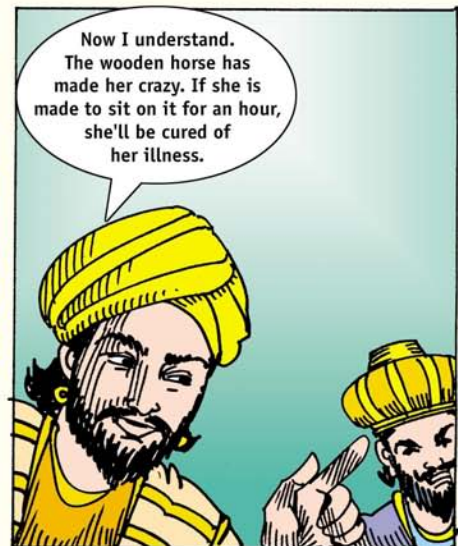
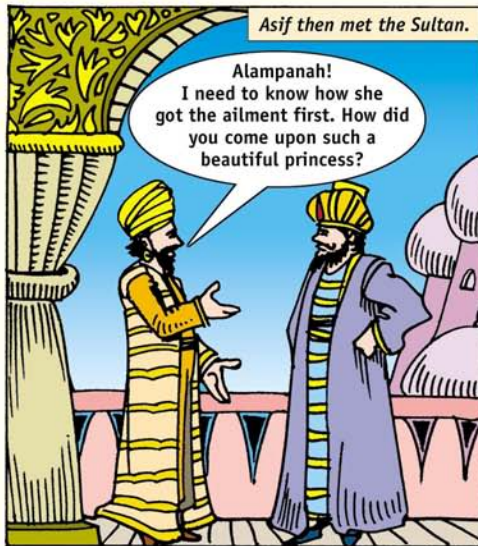
The Arabian Nights : The Flying Horse



The Arabian Nights : The Flying Horse



The Arabian Nights : The Flying Horse



ALL THE ANSWERS

'Children in the News' Quiz



Eleven year old Jayeeta Mitra became Mayor of Kolkata for a day on August 25, 2001 when her essay "How can I make Kolkata a dream city" was adjudged the winner from among 450 shortlisted entries received from 20 city schools.

The Story of Mathew, a biography written by 13-year-old Mathew when he was a Class 4 student, was prescribed as a Civics lesson by the Department of Education in 2002. Mathew had written that article in Italian for a children's magazine!



In 2001, a scientific experiment to launch the International Science Year 2001 was conducted by Britain with over 1,000,000 school children jumping up and down to find out whether they would create an earthquake! They did not, but their exercise entered the record books as the world's largest scientific experiment.

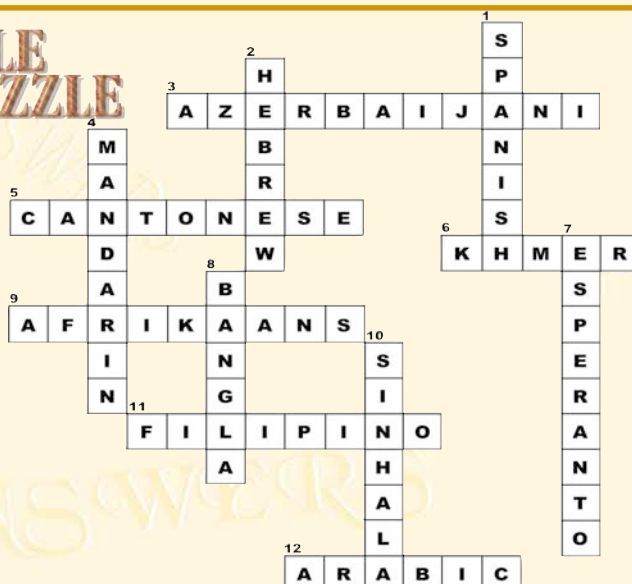
Deepu, a 12-year-old boy of Trivandrum, made a cartoon film called 'The Gap' and this film was selected to represent an Indian entry in the World Animation Cartoon Festival at Belfast, Ireland, in November 2002!



Vijayalakshmi's claim to fame is her ability to speak Hindi to the 10ft tall, 31-year-old elephant Srikrishna. At 12 years of age, Vijayalakshmi is probably the country's youngest mahout! The elephant brought from Bihar in 2002 could understand only Hindi commands, and Vijayalakshmi came to the rescue with her Hindi learnt at school!

While we have given you the answers, to read more about the children given here, look up the November issues of the years mentioned.

PUZZLE DAZZLE



Spot the differences

- 1) Horse's right ear missing;
- 2) horse's mouth;
- 3) spots on horse's body;
- 4) horse's right hind leg;
- 5) number of lines on the cart;
- 6) missing spoke in the cart wheel.

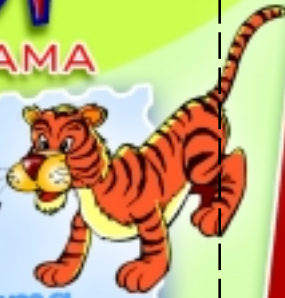
Odd man out

No. 4 is the odd man out.

Junior

CHANDAMAMA

Do you want your children to sharpen their faculties by working on puzzles?
Come to Junior Chandamama for loads of puzzles and games.



Are you looking out for interesting new stories to be read out to the kiddies?
Pick up a copy of Junior Chandamama, and you'll find them there.



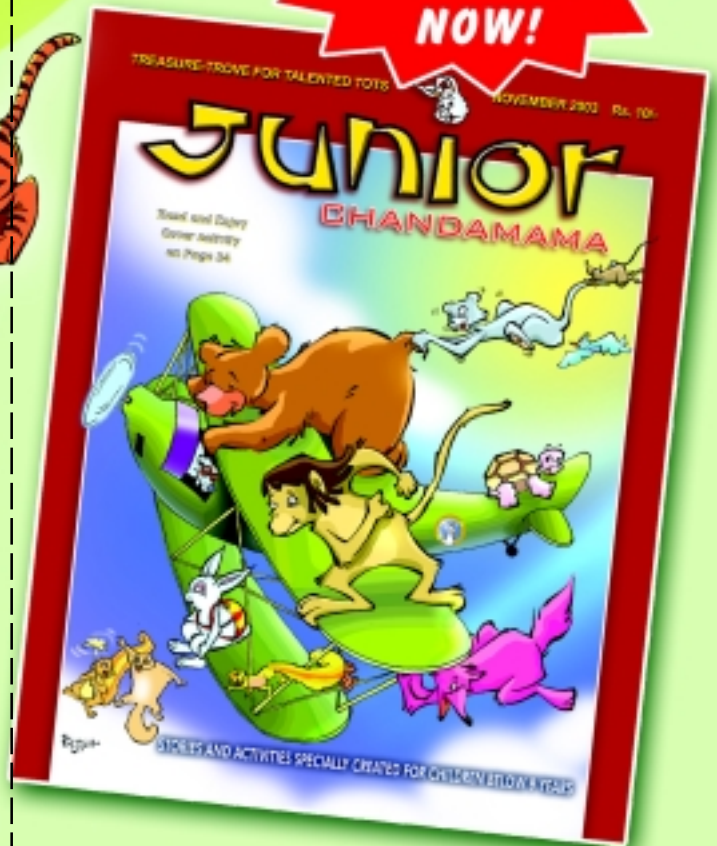
Does your child have a taste for colouring and you want to develop the habit?
Junior Chandamama is what you must get for your child.



Want your kid to learn all about the culture and heritage of India?
Only Junior Chandamama can help you.

PAGE AFTER PAGE WILL KINDLE YOUR CHILD'S IMAGINATION
ISSUE AFTER ISSUE, MONTH AFTER MONTH

RESERVE YOUR COPY NOW!



SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Please enrol me as a subscriber of Junior

Chandamama. I give below the required particulars:

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I am remitting the amount of Rs.120/- for 12 issues by Money Order/Demand Draft/Cheque No.....

on..... Bank

..... branch drawn in favour of

Chandamama India Ltd., encashable at Chennai

(outstation cheque to include Rs.25/- towards Bank

Commission).

Place :

Date :

Signature



*Click
a caption*

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST

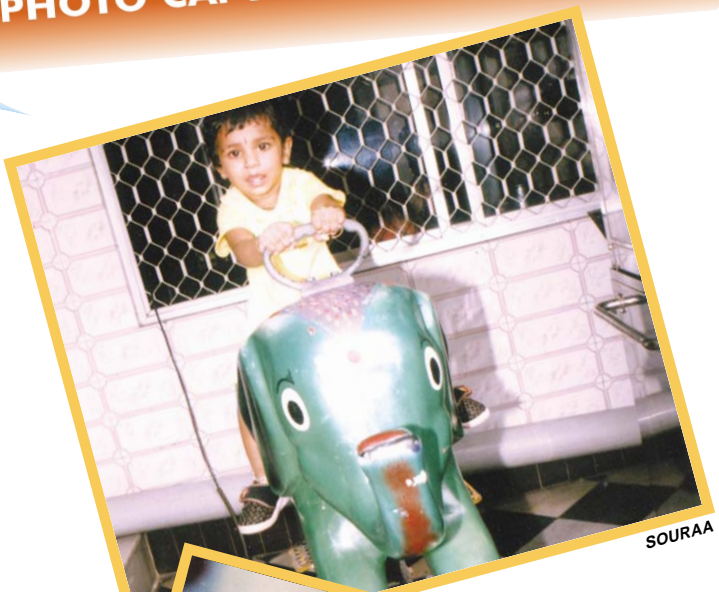
*Can you write a caption
in a few words,
to suit these pictures related
to each other?*

You may write it on a post card marking it:

**Photo Caption Contest
CHANDAMAMA**

and mail it to reach us before the 20th of the
current month.

The best entry will receive a Prize of Rs.100 and it
will also be published in the issue after the next.



SOURAA



SOURAA

*Winning
Entry*



**"What news?"
"Sweet news!"**

Congratulations!

**September 2003
Lucky Winner:**

V. H. SPHOORTHY REDDY

Room No.402
'KORA' College for Girls
R.L. Reddy Nagar
Dargamitta, Nellore
Andhra Pradesh



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FOR MOTHERS A CONTEST WITH A DIFFERENCE !

THEME :

A TRUE INCIDENT

IN THE EARLY YEARS (6-9) OF HER CHILD

**Prize : Educational
endowment in the name
of the child in the form
of National Savings
Certificate**

**One 1st
Prize :
Endowment
for Rs.
10,000**

**Two 2nd
Prizes :
Endowment
for Rs. 5,000
each**

Closing Date :

**Extended by
popular request to
November 15**

Instructions :

● Entries are invited in English. ● Only one entry per participant. ● Length, not exceeding 500 words. ● Write on one side of the paper. ● Only entries written in legible hand will be accepted. ● Attach photograph of mother and child. ● Coupon alongside to accompany entry. ● Enclose your entries with the coupon that appears in Junior Chandamama Oct/Nov issue. Entries without coupons will not be entertained. ● Editor's decision is final. No correspondence on this will be entertained. ● Entries should reach Chandamama India Ltd., 82, Defence Officers Colony, Ekkatuthangal, Chennai - 600 097.

Look for entry form in


Junior
CHANDAMAMA

November 2003 issue





Melters

Butterscotch Candy

*The taste
that melts
everything
away!*

